Ex Libris Claud. Gilbert

THE GRAND DEBATE

Concerning

PRESBITERY AND INDEPENDENCY

By the Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster by authority of *PARLIAMENT*,

Containing, First the Assemblies *Propositions*, (with the proof of them from Scripture) concerning the Presbiteriall Government.

Secondly, the Dissenting Brethrens Reasons against the said Propositions.

Thirdly, The answer of the Assemblies to those Reasons of dissent.

Examined and perused by { *Fer. Whitaker.* / *Tho: Goodwin.* }

By Order of Parliament.

Printed for *Anthony Williamson* and are to be sold at the Queens-Armes neer the west-end of St. *Pauls* Church-Yard 1652.

Die Jovis 3. Febr. 1647.

ORdered by the Lords in Parliament Aſſembled, That Mr. Thomas Goodwin and Mr. Whitaker, ſhall have the overſight and peruſall of ſuch Papers and Writings as Mr. Byfield hath order to Print; And that the ſaid Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Whitaker have free liberty to peruſe the Originals of the ſaid Papers and Writings before they go to the Preſſe.

Joh. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.

The Papers and Writings above mentioned have been examined and peruſed, this we teſtifie.

THO. GOODWIN.

JER. WHITAKER.

THE Diſſenting Brethren entred their Diſſent with Reaſons in writing to be preſented to the Honourable Houſes by the Aſſembly, onely to theſe Propoſitions. *Viz.*

1. *The third Propoſition concerning Presbyteriall Government.*
2. *The Propoſitions concerning the Subordination of Aſſemblies.*
3. *The Propoſition concerning the power of Ordination, whether in a particular Congregation, though it may aſſociate.*

The third PROPOSITION concerning *Presbyteriall Government*, as it was Voted in the Assembly and sent up to both the Honourable Houses of PARLIAMENT.

THe Scripture doth hold forth that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

This Proposition is proved by instances.

I. Instance, Of the Church of *Jerusalem*, which consisted of more Congregations then one, and all those Congregations were under one Presbyteriall Government.

This appeareth, thus,

I. The Church of *Jerusalem* consisted of more Congregations then one, *as is manifest.*

I. By the multitude of Beleevers, *mentioned in divers texts collated:*

Both before the dispersion *of the* Beleevers *there, by meanes of the persecution (mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 8. *in the beginning thereof) witnesse* Acts ch. 1. v. 11. *and* ch. 2. v. 41. 46. 47. *and* ch. 4. v. 4. and ch. 5. v. 14. *and* ch. 6. v. 1. 7.

And also after the dispersion, *Acts ch. 9. v. 31. and ch. 12. v. 24. and ch. 21. v. 20.*

2. *By the* many Apostles and other Preachers *in the Church of* Jerusalem. *If there were but one Congregation there, then each Apostle preached but seldome, which will not consist with* Acts ch. 6. v. 2.

3. The diversity of languages *amongst the Beleevers, mentioned both in the second and sixt chapters of the Acts, doth argue more Congregations then one in that Church.*

II. All those Congregations were under one Presbyterial Government, *Because,*

1. They were one Church, *Act. ch. 8. v. 1. and ch. 2. v. 47. compared with* ch. 5. v. 11. ch. 12. v. 5. *and* ch. 15. v. 4.

2. The Elders of that Church *are mentioned* Acts ch. 11. v. 30. *and* ch. 15. v. 4 6. 22. *and* ch. 21. v. 17. 18.

3. The Apostles did the ordinary acts of Presbyters as Presbyters *in that Church; which proveth a Presbyteriall Church before the dispersion,* Acts ch. 6.

4. *The*

4. *The ſeverall Congregations in* Jeruſalem *being one Church*, the Elders of that Church are mentioned, as meeting together for acts of Government, *Acts ch.* 11. *v.* 30. and *ch.* 15. *v.* 4. *&.* 22. and *ch.* 21. *v.* 17. 18. *and ſo forwards; which proves that theſe ſeverall Congregations were under one Presbyteriall Government.*

And whether theſe Congregations were fixed or not fixed, in regard of officers or members, it is all one as to the truth of the Propoſition.

Nor doth there appeare any materiall difference betwixt the ſeverall Congregations in Jeruſalem, *and the many Congregations now in the ordinary condition of the Church, as to the point of fixednesse in regard of officers or members.*

Therefore the Scripture doth hold forth, that many Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

II. *Inſtance* Of the Church of *Epheſus*; *For*,

1. *That there were* more Congreganions then one in the Church of *Epheſus*, appeares by *Acts ch.* 20. *v.* 31. *where is mention of* Pauls *continuance at* Ephesus, *in preaching for the ſpace of three years; and* Acts ch. 19. v. 18, 19, 20. *where the eſpeciall effect of the word is mentioned, and* v. 10. *and* 17. *of the ſame chapt, where is a diſtinction of* Jewes *and* Greeks, *and* 1 Cor. ch. 16. v. 8 9. *where is a reaſon of* Pauls *ſtay at* Epheſus *until* Pentecoſt, *and* v. 19. *where is mension of a* particular Church, *in the* house of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* then at *Epheſus, as appeareth*, ch. 18. v. 19. 24. 26. *all which layed together do prove that the* multitudes of Believers did make more Congregations then one in the Church of *Epheſus*.

2. *That there were* many Elders over theſe many Congregations as one flock, *appeareth*, Acts ch. 20. v. 17. 25. 28. 30. 36.

3. *That thoſe* many Congregations were one Church, *and that they* were under one Presbyteriall Government, appeareth, *Rev. ch.* 2. *the firſt ſix verſes joyned with* Acts ch. 20. 17. 28.

Concordat cum originali.

Adoniram Byfield Scriba.

The PROPOSITIONS concerning the Subordination of Aſſemblies as they were Vote din the Aſſembly of Divines.

1 *THat all Aſſemblies may lawfully be of ſeverall ſorts, as Provinciall, Nationall, and Oecumenicall.*

It

2. *It is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God that there be a ſubordination of Congregationall, Claſſicall, Provinciall and Nationall Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church.*

Proof of it,

Math. chap. 18. *holding forth the ſubordination of an offending Brother to a particular Church, it doth alſo by a parity of Reaſon hold forth the ſubordination of a Congregation to ſuperiour Aſſemblies.*

3. *In the ſeverall ſorts of Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church, it is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God that Appeals may be from the inferiour to the ſuperiour reſpectively.*

The proofe brought for the ſubordination of Aſſemblies, proves the lawfulneſſe of Appeals from the inferiour to the ſuperiour.

It is agreeable to the light of nature, that he who is wronged and deprived of his right by one power, ſhould have recourſe to another power, which may reſtore unto him his Right againe, and reſcind the ſentence whereby he was wronged; elſe there would be no powerfull remedy provided to remove wrong and to preſerve Right.

The Propoſition concerning Ordination, as it was voted in the Aſſembly of Divines.

It is very requiſite that no ſingle Congregation that can conveniently Aſſociate, do aſſume to it ſelfe all and ſole power in Ordination.

1. *Becauſe there is no example in Scripture, that any ſingle Congregation which might conveniently aſſociate, did aſſume to it ſelfe all and ſole power in ordination; neither is there any rule which may warrant ſuch a practice.*

2. *Becauſe there is in Scripture example of an Ordination in a Preſbytery over divers Congregations; as in the Church of* Jeruſalem, *where were many Congregations; theſe many Congregations were under one Preſbytery, and this Preſbytery did ordain.*

Concordat cum Originali.
ADONIRAM BYFIELD *Scriba.*

To the firſt of theſe. 1. The Diſſenting Brethren gave in after the debate Reaſons againſt the *Propoſition it ſelfe.* 2. Againſt the *proofs* of the Propoſition. 1. From the inſtance of the Church of *Jeruſalem.* 2. Of *Epheſus*, in this Order as followeth.

Rea-

REASONS againſt the *Third Propoſition*, concerning Presbyteriall Government, and the Principles thereof: *viz.*

The Scripture holds forth, That many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

Humbly preſented.

If many Congregations having all Elders already affixed *reſpectively unto them, may be under a Preſbyteriall Government: Then all thoſe Elders muſt ſuſtaine a* ſpeciall *relation of Elders to all the people of thoſe Congregations as one Church, and to every one as a Member thereof.*

But for a company of ſuch Elders already affixed, &c. to ſuſtaine ſuch a relation, carries with it ſo great and manifold incongruities, and inconſiſtencies, with what the Scripture ſpeaks of Elders in their relation to a Church committed to them, and likewiſe with the Principles of the Reformed Churches themſelves, as cannot be admitted.

And therefore ſuch a Government may not be.

The firſt Propoſition.

THat according to the Scriptures, *ſuch a Presbyteriall Government* neceſſarily drawes *ſuch a ſpeciall relation*, is evinced by parts thus.

1. They muſt have the relation of Elders to *all* and *every* one of the Members; for *Church and Elders are Relatives*. And the Argument for the Presbyteriall government is taken by the Presbyteriall Divines from this, *That many Congregations in* Scripture, are made *one Church*, and the *Elders* thereof *Elders* of *that Church*.

2. That *relation* they have, muſt be a more *ſpeciall* relation, as is evident from the practiſe and principles of this Government. For when the Congregations in Shires are divided into ſeverall *Presbyteries* or Deanries, the Elders (though Neighbours) of a bordering Presbyterie, intermeddle not with the Congregations ander another Presbyterie, and yet Neighbour Elders. It is

therefore a ſpeciall relation puts the difference, that thoſe of theſe Presbyteries do judge the Congregations under them, as having *a ſpeciall relation* to them, *ſuch* as *not* to *other* Congregations.

The minor Propoſition.

For the proof of which, we preſent theſe *incongruities* as follow.

I. First, this breeds many incongruous *diſproportions* to the *Order* ſet by Chriſt, about the *Officers* of the Church.

1. To extend a *Paſtors* power of *ordinary ruling* beyond the extent of his *ordinary teaching*, is againſt the order which Chriſt hath ſet (and all *extent* of power muſt as well have an *Inſtitution* of Chriſt, as the *power* or *office* it ſelf, the difference of *Evangeliſts* and *ordinary Paſtors* lay in *extent* of power) but the extent of a Paſtors ordinary ruling power, is but to *that* Flock as his whole Flock which he is able to feed. The firſt *Propoſition* is confirmed, firſt by Scripture; ſecondly, by *Reaſon*.

First, by Scripture, *Act.*20. 28. *Take heed to your ſelves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.* Whence firſt we ſee the ſpeciall limitation of their *extenſive power and revelation* [*to a flock*] & [ALL *in that flock*] is by the *Holy Ghoſt*, and not by man, and therefore is not to be extended *by man*, further then the Holy Ghoſt hath appointed.

2. The extent of that relation *to that flock, and the whole flock they feed*, and *to feed all that flock alike*. And if they be preaching Elders, then to feed by preaching, and therefore are Overſeers to them to feed them, and this becauſe they feed them.

3. He ſpeaks to *preaching* Elders eſpecially, that *feed by doctrine*: for he propounds his own example to them, *v.* 20. *That he had revealed the whole counſel of God.* And *Peter* ſeconds *Paul* in this, 1 *Pet.*5.2. *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the overſight thereof. The flock* ἐν ὑμῖν *among you*: is *that* flock any of them had *relation* to as his flock *reſpectively*. *Peter* here writing unto the Churches in ſeverall Nations, *ch.*1. *v.*1. whereas in *Act.*20.28. the charge is to the particular Elders of *Epheſus* to that whole flock; therefore that *note* of *reſpectiveneſſe* is here put ἐν ὑμῖν among you: that is, that flock which reſpectively belongs to you, as *Coloſſ.* 1. 17. *Who is for you a faithfull Miniſter*, that is, your *proper* Paſtor: So the flock ἐν ὑμῖν is your ſeverall *proper* flocks that belong to you. And hereby it appears that their *overſight* is not extendible beyond their *feeding*. Thus alſo *Hebr.* 13. *ver.* 7. *Remember them that have the rule over you, and have ſpoken to you the Word of God*; which he ſpeaks of *preaching* Elders, and of *ruling* Elders (of whom he ſpeaks, *ver.* 17.) *Obey them*

them that have the RULE *over you, for they watch for your ſouls, as thoſe that muſt give an accompt.* And whether theſe places note out two ſort of Offices, *Preaching* Elders, *ver.*7. and *Ruling* Elders, *ver.*17. or but one ſort, and ſo but ſeverall acts of the ſame Office, however, if but *one*, yet ſtill the ordinary rule over them was not farther extendible then their ordinary preaching; if *two ſorts* of Officers, they being Officers together in the ſame Church, if the *Paſtors* power of *ruling* extends no farther then his preaching, then the meer *ruling* Elders power, (or his that is aſſiſtant to him) muſt extend no farther then the *Paſtors* alſo; this is the *naturall* obligation to obedience, and ſo is the *meaſure* to ſet the *bounds* of the extent of ordinary *Church power*. 'Tis one argument uſed againſt *Epiſcopall power*, that they are inforced to obey him that ſpeaks not the word to them, nor watches over their ſouls; And this holds as well againſt theſe *Presbyteriall* Officers. When a man to be *excommunicated* comes before ſuch, if he ſaies I am not bound to obey you in ſuch an authoritative way, nor do I owe a ſubjection as to a power of cenſure in you, for many, yea *moſt* of you, *never ſpake the word* unto me, nor did *watch* over my ſoul; nay, perhaps the man can ſay, he *never ſaw their faces* afore.

And it avails not to ſay that *they may occaſionally preach*; for take two places more, the 1 *Theſſ.*5. 12. ſpeaking of *reſpect* to their Officers, *Know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you*: Theſe two *labour*, and *are over you*, are commenſurable; that is, who make it their calling to have a care of you, which the *many Paſtors* and *Elders* in a *common Preſbytery* cannot. And *labour*, in what? 1 *Tim.*1. 17. expounds it, *That labour in word and Doctrine*: *The Elders that rule well*, are worthy of *double honour*, *eſpecially thoſe that labour in the word and Doctrine*. And expound this latter known place, whether of Teaching Elders only, or *ruling* and *teaching* both (as the Reformed Churches doe) however it affords this to us; that *the extent of ruling* in either the one or the other, is but *as large as teaching*: And if it be meant of *Teaching Elders* only, that both *rule* and *labour in the word and Doctrine*, yet if they be limited in *labouring in the word* (as they are being fixed Paſtors to their own Congregations) *then in ruling*. And if it be meant of ruling Elders (as diſtinct from them) yet their *ruling* is but of the *ſame extent*, that the others *labouring* in the word is, and that is extended but to one Congregation.

And ſecondly, *Reaſon* is for this; For in a *Paſtors* Office in which *Preaching* and *Ruling* are joyned, yet his power of *ruling*, flows in him, from, and is the *adjunct* of his *power to preach*, and to be ſure it is not extendible *further*; and *however*, yet there is the ſame proportion of either, and then by juſt reaſon, the *extent* of the *Church*, which is the *ſubject* of his *ordinary ruling*, *cannot* be extended *larger* then what is the *ordinary ſubject of his preaching*, and ſo theſe

relations are of equall limits; If a father hath the power of governing, *as a father*, then it is extendible onely to thoſe he is a father to. And that a Paſtor hath his ordinary ruling power annexed to his ordinary power of preaching, is proved by theſe reaſons.

Firſt, If not upon this ground, then upon ſome other: not by any *ſpeciall* faculty and *Office*, over and above this of Preaching, for then he ſhould be ordained a *ruling* Elder over and above his being firſt a *preaching* Elder as a new faculty given him; or by being made a *Ruler* firſt, and then this of *preaching* ſuperadded, as the *Biſhops* firſt made *Deacons*, then *Presbyters*. But

Secondly, *All the keyes* are given him at once, the keyes of *ruling* with the keyes of *knowledge*, the power of the ſtaffe intrinſecally followes, his being a Paſtor or Shepherd; and though the one is a power of *meer order*, namely, *that* of *Preaching*, and *that* of his Ruling be a power of *juriſdiction* (to be exerciſed with others and not alone) yet ſtill his receiving power to joyne with others in thoſe acts of Rule of juriſdiction is from this his power of Order, and the ordinary extent of his authority therein, is extendible no farther then his ordinary call to preach. Yea

Thirdly, The *extent* of the power of the *Apoſtles* themſelves, in *ruling in all* the Churches was *founded* upon, and *extendible* with their commiſſion to preach *in all* Churches, and their very call and obligation being not to preach in a ſet fixed relation, as ordinary Paſtors calling is, but to all Churches in all Nations: Hence their power of ruling was anſwerable. It was their very call to be *univerſall Paſtors*, and therefore *univerſall Rulers*; yea and in reference to thoſe that *are without*, their authority of *ruling* was narrower, in the extent of it, then of their *preaching*. The *Apoſtles* might preach to *Heathens*, and their call was ſo to doe, to convert them, but they had not power to *rule all* men: *What have I to doe to judge them that are Without?* But in *this way of Presbyteriall Government*, though they alſo may occaſionally preach where they may not rule, yet the proportion of their *ordinary ruling*, is extended beyond the proportion of their *ordinary preaching*, which it was not in the *Apoſtles* themſelves.

Secondly, It breeds an *incongruous diſproportion* between the *Offices* of *Ruling* and *Preaching* Elders *compared among themſelves*, for this Government makes this Extent of the *Ruling* Elders office and relation, to be *larger* then that of their *Teachers* or Paſtors; for the Paſtor, *quâ Paſtor*, is limited *to his* particular Congregation he is fixed to, for the ordinary performance of his office, as the Deacons alſo are; but the Ruling Elders Office, *quâ Ruling Elder*, is extended over *all* theſe Congregations in this Presbyterie. The *Ruling Elder* performes his office in the *higheſt perfection* of it, as to admoniſh, excommunicate in all theſe Churches, but the *Paſtors* are limited in the *higheſt* work of their Callings,

Callings, (Preaching being more excellent then *Ruling*, yea then Baptizing is) unto *one* Congregation; *That* in the firſt Epiſtle to *Tim. chap.* 5. *v.* 17. (interpret it as you will) juſtifies this.

Thirdly, It *perverts the order and diſtinction of Teaching Elders*, and meer *Ruling Elders* (as the Reformed Churches call them) *or Church Governours* (as the Aſſembly) That whereas Chriſt hath made ſome *Teaching* Elders, and ſome *Ruling* Elders, and theſe *diſtinct* in this, that the *Preaching* Elders Office is to *preach and rule*, the *Ruling* Elders Office *only to rule*: this frame of *Presbyteriall government*, makes one perſon, not only to do both theſe works, (which in a particular Congregation every Paſtor doth) but *formally* to beare both thoſe Offices, in reſpect of a double relation he doth ſuſtein, namely, of a *Paſtor*, to be a Preaching Elder to *the Congregation* where he is fixed, and a *meer ruling Elder* to the *reſt* of the Congregations of the *Claſſicall* Church: for it is demanded, when a *Paſtor* in a particular Congregation is in this common Presbytery, what *ſort of Officer* he is to that Presbyteriall Church? An *Elder* he is, becauſe he doth the work of an Elder; A *Teaching* Elder to *that* Church he is not, for to that *whole* Church *he labours not in the word and Doctrine. Timothy, Epiſt.* 1. *ch.* 5. *v.* 17. Therefore a *meer ruling Elder* he muſt be, and ſo *the ſame* man bears *two ſorts* of Offices, and by this means there are *two ſorts* of meer ruling Elders: whereas in a particular Congregation, *a Paſtor* though he rules, yet he ruleth as a Paſtor to *that* Congregation. And this diſorder and confuſion is further ſet out, in that, by this means the *ſame* Officer hath a *full* relation to *one* Church, and but *half* a relation to *another*, and cauſeth him to perform the *whole* of his Office to *one* Church (*the particular* Church he hath relation to) and but the *half* thereof to the other.

Fourthly, It makes an *incongruous diſproportion* between the *Extent* of the relation of thoſe two *Offices* of *Elders* and *Deacons* unto a Church. If the Scriptures had intended *many* Churches making *one* Church, and the *Elders* of thoſe many Churches to have been Elders *in common* to thoſe Churches as one Church, then in like manner the *Deacons* of *all* thoſe Churches ſhould make up a *common Deaconry*, and be *Deacons* in common unto all thoſe Churches in an ordinary way as the other are Elders: But this is contrary to the practiſe of the *Reformed Churches*, though ſubject to the Presbyteriall Government, in which the *Deacons* have the ordinary relation of *Deacons* in no reſpect extended further then to *a particular Congregation*, nor do they exerciſe Acts of that Office in an ordinary way to *other* Congregations, nor otherwiſe to neighbour Congregations then to *any* other; much leſſe is there a *common Deaconſhip* of them all: And why ſhould not *the later* be erected over all thoſe Churches as one Church, as well as a *common Elderſhip*? eſpecially

if in matters of this nature, *par ratio* should carry it; every Church, *quâ Church*, being a body, hath a relation to *all its Officers* as Organicall members thereof; So *Rom.* 12. and the 4. And the Apostle writing to *Philippi*, a Church in a City, he writes to the Bishops [*the Elders*] and the *Deacons* as both *alike* Officers of that Church. And *Acts* 6. The *Deacons* of the Church of *Jerusalem* (if there were many Congregations as our brethren suppose) were chosen by the *whole multitude* when gathered together by the twelve. And therefore were Deacons of the *whole Church* as well as the Elders, *Elders* thereof. Now if the Deacons Office should thus be extended to all the Congregations as the Elders is, then why should not *each* Church be bound to bring contributions to the *Deacons* of *each* Church, and to be distributed in common? and so our *purses* should be subject to the *Deacons in common, as far* as *our persons* to the *Elders in common*, and they might challenge the same power in their Office over the one, that the Elders do over the other; and then also *each* Congregation were in an *ordinary* and *standing* obligation bound to relieve *all* the Poor in *those Churches*, as well as those in *their own* Patishes, not only by the *common law of Charity*, but by vertue *of speciall relation* of their being *one* Church, which *relation* in *all* these things, doth beget the *like* Obligation that it doth *in government*; and so *all things* of this nature should *be alike common to all and each*, and there should be *a common Treasury* for this one great *Diaconat* Church, as we may in a paralel allusion to that other name of *Presbyteriall*, call it.

II. A second head of *Incongruities*, and *Inconsistencies* which will follow upon it, are in *the mutuall duties* required, and that doe necessarily follow upon this *standing relation* for a constant government of these *Elders to all this* people of *these Churches*, and *of the people to these Elders*.

1. From the *People* to *all these Elders*. According unto what the Scripture speaks of, as due to *standing Elders*, they owe at least *honour* and esteem; yea, *maintenance* to all their Elders, whether those that *ordinarily rule* them or *preach* to them; and they owe it for both, 1 *Tim. chap.* 5. *v.* 17. & 18. *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted Worthy of double honour, especially those that labour in the word and Doctrine.* Which *honour* is expressed by the Analogy of *that* law, *ver.* 18. not to *muzle up the mouth of the Oxe that treadeth out the corne.* And this is certainly due to Elders, *for all*, that *is the work of Elders*, whether performed apart, or together, by way of *jurisdiction* in a *Presbytery*; And it cannot be denied, but that their *constant ruling* as in *the Presbytery*, is one *great part* of the *Worke of Elders*, and so must be here intended, for which an *especiall honour* is due. And as they are to feed *all* and *every one* in the *flock*, as *Acts* 20. *ver.* 28. so *maintenance* and *honour* is due from *all* people to *all* and *every one* of these *Elders*, as well to those

that

that *rule*, as thoſe that *labour in the Word and Doctrine*. And in *reaſon*, if the Elders that *rule well* (and performe the leſſer acts of ruling) in their *particular Congregations*, and the *Preſbyteries thereof* are to have this honour in their relations, then *all* thoſe Elders that *rule well* in the *common Preſbytery* (and perform the greateſt acts of ruling) are to have the like from all that *Claſſicall* Church: the emphaſis being put upon *ruling well*, and in thoſe acts done by them the *excellency of ruling* conſiſteth, and the precept is not to honour *Preſbyteries* in ſome abſtract notion, but *Elders*: becauſe the particular *perſons* of the *Elders* are to be the object of it, and thoſe moſt who excell moſt in that rule, that *rule well* or beſt; but when there are *many* Congregations that have their proper *fixed Paſtors* and *Elders* whom they maintain for performing *one* part of the Elders *work* (for they perform but one part of it) how ſhall they perform this due to *all the reſt* for that *other part* of it? and it is *due* from *every* perſon as he is able, or he *cannot* perform his duty. How burthenſome, how confuſed would this be? And then how to proportion this, ſuppoſe it ſhould not be *maintenance*, but *honour* and eſteem, this people will not be able to judge; not only for that they cannot be preſent at their work, and ſo cannot judge of it; but becauſe either it muſt be proportioned to them as *conſtant Preaching Elders*, or as *Ruling*; not as to Preaching Elders, for they *labour* not to them *as ſuch*; (the ground upon which it is required is, *That they tread out their Corn*) and to honour and eſteem them as *Ruling Elders only*, were to honour *Preaching Elders* below the rank and degree of their Office. So

Secondly, It brings the *like Incongruities* upon the performance of thoſe *duties* of Elders, which the *New Teſtament* indifferently requires of all thoſe that it acknowledgeth to be *Elders* unto a people, and therefore *no ſuch conſtant relation of Elders to ſo many Churches may be*. As firſt, *Praying* with the ſick, *Send for the Elders of the Church to pray for them*, *Jam. chap. 5. ver. 14.* What, are theſe Elders of a Presbyteriall Church bound hereto? this duty lies in common upon Elders of Churches, and how ſhall we diſtinguiſh when the Scripture doth not? Secondly, *Viſiting from houſe to houſe*, as *Paul* in his example inſtructs the Elders of *Epheſus*, *Act. ch. 20. v. 20.* Thirdly, *Watching over mens ſouls, as thoſe that muſt give accompt*, *Hebr. chap. 13. ver. 17.* To *watch*, is not to ſtay till cauſes are brought by *appeals* or ſo, from the Congregations, but *perſonally* to *obſerve* and *overſee them*, as ſouls committed to them, which they muſt give an accompt for. Fourthly, *of Preaching*, (if Preaching Elders) *in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*. The Biſhops, they ſaid the flock was theirs, and the whole care committed to them: and to ſalve the *incongruity* of not being able to preach themſelves to them, they profeſſed *a derivative delegated* power to inferior Paſtors, whom they called their *Curats*. This was plain dealing: but *theſe Elders* make *all the Whole flock theirs* and this from thoſe

Scriptures

Scriptures that ſpeak of *Elders* and *flock*, and themſelves not *Curats*, and ſo perſonally obliged according to the rules in Scripture, and yet cannot performe it, which is a *Worſe Incongruitie*.

If it be ſaid, *that they may part theſe duties among them.*

Ubi Scriptura non diſtinguit, nec nos debemus diſtinguere. Now all thoſe duties that are ſpoken of Elders to the flocks, they are without diſtinction, as in reſpect of *the object to whom* they are extended. *Paul* ſaith to thoſe of *Epheſus*, *Feed the flock*. *Peter* the like to thoſe he writes to, *The Flock*, ἐν ὑμῖν reſpectively, *To feed and to take the overſight of them.* The author to the *Hebrewes*, *To watch over their ſouls*; And to the *Theſſalonians*, he deſcribes them to be thoſe that *are over them, & labour and admoniſh them.* When thoſe Injunctions are thus laid upon *all*, how ſhall the conſciences of *Elders* be able to part and diſtinguiſh their diſcharge of them, and to ſay, Though I am an *Elder* in common to *all* in theſe Congregations, yet I am bound *but* to governe them in *greater* matters, and to admoniſh them as with others, when *publickly* met in a *Conſiſtorie*, and am bound to no *other acts of Elderſhip*; and yet to *this* particular Congregation, I am obliged to *private admonition*, *rule*, *watchfulneſſe*, *&c.* Where hath the Scripture ſet theſe bounds, or thus parted them? And therefore certainly all theſe places hold forth ſingly, only the Elders and their duties of a particular Church ſpecl thereto, as knowing no other: 'Twas neceſſary Chriſt ſhould have ſet the bounds and given the diſtinction, and not indifferently lay all theſe upon all. And either in theſe places the duties of *Elders in a common* Presbyterie are contained, and that under *the notion of Elders* to thoſe, or they are not to be found in the New Teſtament. *And all theſe may be brought in ſeveral Argument alone by themſelves againſt the main Propoſition, though here they come in onely branches of the minor.*

III. Laſtly, This is *inconſiſtent* with the *ordinary way of the Call* of Elders held forth in the word, and the Principles of the Reformed Churches.

There are two parts of this Call. Firſt, *Choice*. Secondly, *Ordination*.

Firſt for *Choice*, *Chamier* in the name of all the Reformed Churches, allowes the *people* this, the *approbation* of their Elders, and ſo in *Scotland*. And if the *Apoſtles* themſelves allowed them the *choice* of the *Deacons*, that had the charge of the Church treaſury, & took care of their *bodies*; then *much more* of their *Elders* that have to doe with their *conſciences*. Looke what ever the *right* of the *people* is in the *choice* of them that ſhould *preach* to them, there is as much reaſon they ſhould have the exerciſe of it in the *choice* of thoſe *Elders that in a common Preshyterie doe rule over them*, for they perform *one* part of the Elders duty, namely *Ruling*, as the *Preaching* Elders do the *other*; and therefore by the equity of the ſame law, that ſpeakes of Elders indefinitely, if they chooſe any Elders *as Elders to them*, they are to chooſe theſe alſo, there being

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no diſtinction put of chuſing Preaching Elders onely, but *Elders* indefinitely: And further, the greateſt and higheſt acts of power over them, are committed in an ordinary way unto them, as of *Excommunication*, of all puniſhments the moſt formidable: there is put as much, if not more then every mans life(that is a member of that Claſſicall Church)into their hands, *the enjoyment of all Ordinances for ever*: And ſo the power of *depoſing their Miniſters* already fix'd to them, and of *refuſing to ordaine them*,they ſhall approve: And therefore in antiquity, of all other the perſons of the *Biſhops*, who had the power of all thoſe, were choſen by all the people, and by Panegyricall meetings.

And it is ſtrengthened by this further parallel: A Miniſters Call hath two parts: firſt, *Ordination*, which belongs to the *Elders*. Secondly,*Choice*, in which the *people* have ſome intereſt: Theſe Elders, *as Elders in common*, and theſe Congregations *as one Church* be *relatives*, and ſo *that intereſt* which a Church, *quâ Church* hath, is commenſurable *to* the *intereſt* of theſe Elders, *quâ Elders*: If therefore *in ordaining*, all *the Elders* in a common Presbytery, do joyne to ordain an *Officer*, then *all the people*, *quâ Church*, muſt joyn in chuſing or approving him: neither can their common right of chuſing be ſwallowed up by the intereſt of their Elders ordaining him.

And if it be ſaid *they all chuſe by vertue of the generall Law of combination,as the Shires Parliament men.* The conſtitution of the State makes the one; if the like be found in Scripture it will be ſufficient: but if not, but that *this intereſt* muſt be common to the people of the Claſſicall Church, it is asked, when a fix'd Paſtor is to be choſen to a particular charge, *what Office he ſhall be choſen to by the people of the other* Congregations? Not to a *Paſtors* Office, he is not to be ſuch to them; if to be a *ruling Elder* onely, then, beſides that he hath two Offices (as afore) ſo now he muſt have *two* choices, and *two* Ordinations: We chuſe him for our *Paſtor*, ſaies the *particular Church* he belongs to: and we, ſay the *other*,to *Ruling*. And beſides, in his *Ordination*, the *people* have an intereſt of *preſence* and joyning in the faſting and prayer at his *Ordination*: and *this* therefore muſt be performed, either in a *panegyricall* meeting of all, (which cannot be) or in *all* the ſeverall Churches, which will *multiply* the Ordination of them.

The Major Propoſition confirmed.

IN regard that the main *Argumentation* of ſuch as contend for a Presbyteriall Government (as in their writings and otherwayes appeares) *is from the mention of the Elders of ſuch and ſuch a* Church (as, *Jeruſalem, &c.*) *having many* Congregations (as they ſuppoſe.) The conſequence of the *Major* was taken ſo much for granted as on all ſides agreed on, as it was leſſe inſiſted upon the *firſt day*; but being denyed and anſwered thus, *that they beare not the relation*

of Elders, but of a Preſbytery, becauſe, *quod convenit toti quâ toti, non convenit cuilibet parti*; *And that if Elders*, yet *in ſenſu compoſito non diviſo*, *As a Colonell is a Colonell to a particular Regiment, but in a Councell of War, not ſo to all Regiments: A head of a particular Tribe is an head to his own Tribe diviſively, but not ſo to all the Tribes, and the like.*

I. For that Logicall Axiome: 'Tis true, *quod convenit toti quâ toti, non convenit cuilibet parti*: and ſo here, *that* which doth *competere toti*, to the *whole* of theſe Elders, belongs not to every part; for take them all as met together, they are a *Preſbytery*, and accordingly each *Elder* is not a *Preſbytery* to all theſe Congregations, nor doth the Argument ſuppoſe it, but onely that if they be a *common Preſbytery* to all theſe Congregations, that they then bear the relation of *Elders*; As take an heap of ſtones, 'tis true, each ſtone is not an heap of ſtones, but each ſtone is a ſtone in that heap. So this Company of *Elders*, muſt be ſuppoſed both a *Preſbytery*, and alſo *Elders* to this *whole* people and *every* member of them: which is farther proved thus;

1. The Scriptures would have the people *look at* them and *honour* them *as Elders* in all acts of *Ruling* as well as in *Preaching*, and eſpecially wherein the moſt and *chief of ruling* lies, and wherein the excellency of their *ruling* is ſeen; They *rule moſt* and *beſt* when met in this common *Preſbytery*: upon that relation we are to honour them, as performing this rule, and under that relation they muſt be ſaid to perform it: *The Elders that rule well, are worthy of double honour, eſpecially thoſe that labour in the Word and Doctrine, Tim.* 5. 17. And beſides, otherwiſe we deſtroy the relation of Elders, *quâ Elders*, in the *higheſt* acts of governing, which are *exerciſed only* in a *Preſbytery*.

2. The *New Teſtament* doth indifferently and promiſcuouſly uſe the word *Preſbytery*, and the word *Elders*, of the ſame perſons in relation to the ſame people; and therefore to whom theſe *Elders* are ſuppoſed to be a *Preſbytery*, they muſt bear the relation of *Elders*, *Mat.* 21. 23. thoſe that are called *Elders of the people*, are called, *Luke* 22. πρεσβυτέριον τοῦ λαοῦ, *the Preſbytery of the people*: ſo as if they related *as a Preſbytery* to the people, to the ſame people they related *as Elders*.

II. *Secondly*, For that diſtinction of their being *Elders* onely in a community to *all* thoſe Congregations as one Church, *in ſenſu aggregato*, but not *in ſenſu diviſo*, to *every* perſon thereof, as was inſtanted in *Burgeſſes*, &c. Firſt, This *Church* as it is *totum aggregatum*, is but an abſtract notion, but the *rule* and *government* of the *Elders* in a *Preſbytery*, fal's upon perſons in particular, and every member of that Church; if therefore they be *Elders* in the *Preſbytery* to that Church, it muſt be that they are *Elders* to every perſon therein. *Again*, it muſt be remembred *where we are*, namely upon *what the Scriptures hold forth*, ſo the Propoſition runneth. And if there had been thoſe differing relations of *Elders*,

(which

(which from those similitudes in Common-wealths, Armies, and the Universities are given) it were necessary the Scripture should have held it forth by like *differing names* and *respects*, or by *differing charges*, whereby it might appear that this relation obligeth them to this duty, and this other relation to that, which being not done is therefore to us *a fiction*. That it was necessary appeares from the instances themselves, As in that of the *Tribes*, there were *generall Elders* of *all* the Tribes, and there were (and perhaps some of them the same men) that were *Heads* and *Elders* of the *particular* Tribes. But as *this* was a *differing* relation and respect in the same, or divers persons, so they had *names* and titles of *difference* and distinction: For the *Heads generall* (as we may call them) were called *Elders of the people*. The *particular Elders* of particular Tribes, were called by the way of distinction from them, *Elders of such Cities, Families, &c.* And there were as distinct lawes given in such cases. The *Elders* of the *severall* Tribes did *such* and *such particulars* in their Tribes *respectively*, and the *generall Elders* had reserved cases of *Blasphemy, &c.* set down by the Law. So in that instance of the *Heads* of *Colledges*, and *Heads* of the *University*, there is as a differing, so a distinguishing Character: the *names* are changed, the *particular* bodies are called *Colledges*, the *generall* body the *University*, and their severall speciall relations to their Colledges is expressed by the Title of *Masters* of such and such Colledges, and the other by the title of *Heads* to the University. Yea, and accordingly there are differing *statutes*, the *locall* statutes for *each* Colledge a-part, or for Colledges *as Colledges*, and the duties of *Masters* in their speciall relations: and there are statutes for the *Universitie* and their duties as *Heads* thereof: and this distinction and difference was necessary, if there were this differing relation. But for the case in hand, if we come to the *New Testament* to find out these severall *jurisdictions and Relations* of *Elders*, therein we still read but simply and singly *Elders* and *Churches* as Relatives, no such note of *distinction*. And also speaking of the *duties* of *Elders* to the *people*, and *people* to *Elders*, it speakes simularly and *univocally*: so as whoever will take upon them to be *Elders*, all those duties fall upon them, let them *distinguish* how they *can*. And to *confirm* this, the *instances* in the *Minor* serve. *And where the Scripture doth not distinguish, we are not to distinguish.* And if the *Elders* of a *particular* Congregation are *Elders* to *that* Church, both *in sensu diviso*, and every member thereof, and also *in sensu composito*, in *their Presbyteries* unto the whole, then those *generall Elders* must beare the like *relation* to that *Classicall Church* and every *Member* of *it*; else the *difference* is so vast, and the *consequent difference* of *duties* thereupon depending such, as it was necessary a *distinction* should have been made in Scripture, that *each might know their duties*.

If all the *Records*, *Lawes*, and *Ruled cases* of this *Kingdome*, should in setting down the *ordinary government* thereof, have made mention onely and singly of

Burgeſſes (as the Rulers) and of *Corporations* (as the Correlate to them) and uſed no other diſtinguiſhing word; and there were undeniably *Burgeſſes* of *every* Incorporate Town continued from antiquity: if any would afterwards pretend that this word *Corporation* was intended by our Anceſtors to import an *Aſſociation* or Community of *many* of theſe *Corporations* into one *Shire*, and that by *Burgeſſes* of thoſe Corporations were meant a *community* of all thoſe Burgeſſes in one *body for Government*, and ſo pretend the *ſame names* w thout diſtinction, and ſay they were alſo meant: yea, and further, if the *Lawes* and *Charters* concerning ſuch Burgeſſes in *each* Corporation, the duties given them in charge by the Law, in their relations to their Corporations, did run *without any diſtinction* of what the Burgeſſes in the ſuppoſed *greater* Corporation ſhould do in that relation and community, from what the ſame Burgeſſes in their *leſſer* Corporations in a more proper relation do: Yea, and if the Duties ſet down in thoſe Lawes mutually between Corporations, and thoſe Burgeſſes ſhould argue an *inconſiſtency* with the government of Burgeſſes over *many Corporations* in common (as the *minor* here ſhewes it to be in our caſe) but all *naturally* fall in with that of Burgeſſes over *ſingle* Corporations: In this caſe to ſay that therefore this *Kingdome did hold forth, there might not be* (that is, according to the lawes thereof) *ſuch a government of the Burgeſſe of Corporations over many* Corporations, were not this a right way of arguing to overthrow ſuch a pretence?

And if in *anſwer* to ſuch arguments it ſhould be ſaid, *that both* theſe might be conſiſtent: For, that in forein States, and Kingdomes, and Societies, there are *Burgeſſes of particular Corporations*, and there are *Burgeſſes in an Aſſembly of Parliament* (ſo called by way of diſtinction) met in common, for the ordinary government of all thoſe *Corporations* in common, and therefore the like may be here in this. The *reply* were eaſie, that what ever ſuch diſtinction there is in *other* States, yet the queſtion is of ſuch Burgeſſes as the Lawes of *this* State hold forth, the queſtion is of ſuch Burgeſſes as *this* Kingdom hath ſet up where there is *no diſtinction of Burgeſſes of Corporations, and Burgeſſes in Parliament* mentioned. But on the contrary onely, *one ſingle uniform ſtile* and title in the Lawes, namely, *Burgeſſes of the Corporation* and duties ſuited thereunto. Now parallel to this caſe are our Arguments, and the Anſwers given thereto.

Laſtly, if they be Elders onely *in ſenſu aggregato*, yet ſo farre as they are acknowledged *thus Elders*, ſo far will *many* of the *incongruities* in the *Minor* follow them, and fall upon them, as that ſtill they are but *meerely Ruling Elders*, and that there be Deacons *in ſenſu aggregato*.

Reaſons

REASONS againſt, and EXCEPTIONS to the firſt proofe of the FIRST ASSERTION. *viz.*

That the Church of Jeruſalem *conſiſted of more Congregations then one, from* the multitude of Beleevers.

FIrſt, *Reaſons* to ſhew *there were not more then could meet in one place.*

The Holy Ghoſt hath from firſt to laſt as *on purpoſe* ſhewed this, as if his ſcope had been aforehand to prevent and to preclude all reaſonings to the contrary.

1. In the *beginnings* of that Church, their meetings are ſet out to us by two Adjuncts. Firſt, that they met ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *with one accord* in the ſame duty of prayer, *Acts* 1. 14. And ſecondly, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, *together in one and the ſame company, ver.* 15. Which therefore is there and uſually tranſlated *in one place.* And that here by theſe words the *intent* of the Holy Ghoſt is to ſhew their meeting in *one* and the *ſame* Aſſembly, is evident. For whereas in the 15. *verſe* 'tis ſaid *Peter ſtood up in the midſt of them*, (as therefore being preſent together in one company) he adds, *And the number of them that were* ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, that is *preſent together in company, were an hundred and twenty.*

2. Then *ch.* 2. *v.* 1. *Another meeting* of theirs for worſhip at *Pentecoſt* is continued to be expreſſed in the ſame phraſes a ſecond time, *They were all with one accord in one place.*

3. Then when *about three thouſand*, yet ſtill *ſome* of their meetings then for ſome acts of worſhip are recorded to have been as before *with one accord*, as joyning unanimouſly in the ſame duty, and in ſtead of that former expreſſion ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ (uſed of the formes meetings) there is the mention of the *place* it ſelf, where they met, ſet down to ſupply it, and ſo to interpret it, and ſhews it was ſtill in *one Aſſembly*, verſ. 46. *They continued daily with one accord* IN THE TEMPLE, as mentioning the very place where they had their moſt frequent meetings which were for *hearing*, as being there altogether *in one Aſſembly*; and not as comming thither only for Jewiſh worſhip: for it is ſaid of *theſe* as of the *former* meetings mentioned, which were proper to themſelves, *That they continued with one accord.* And though they held theſe meetings in this place for preaching, that the Jews might be preſent to hear, &c. Yet that hindred not, but it was a *Church meeting* to them; wherein they continued *with one accord*; which expreſſion is ſtill uſed of all their Chriſtian meetings throughout this Story, *Acts* 1, 14. & 4. 24 & 5. 12. & 15. 25.

4. When there was a *further addition* to theſe, Chap. 5. Verſe 1. (whether to *five thouſand* or no, is ſpoken to afterwards) yet in that Chapter, he making a deſcription of their State, in almoſt all the very ſame particulars by which he had done it before, Chap. 2. from Verſe 43. unto the end (as by the parallel comparing of theſe two paſſages of the Story will appear;) he laſtly ſpeaking of *a meeting* of theirs (which is the point in hand) as carefully puts in, as in the former. Verſe 14. *And they were* ALL *with one accord in Solomons Porch*, the ſame words he had uſed Chap. 2. Verſe 46. Their union and joyning together *with one accord* being carefully indigitated, and *the place* named in ſtead of ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, as was obſerved before. And that the [*All that met*] were not the *Apoſtles* only, appears not only by the forementioned parallel of this with Chap. 2. Verſe 46. where their being *with one accord* in the Temple, is ſpoken of *all* the multitude, and ſo here. But ſecondly, that *all* the *Apoſtles* ſhould be met *with one accord* in any duty, and not the *people* who are ſaid *to continue in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Prayer*, and ὁμοθυμαδὸν (or *with one accord*) ſtill in the ſtory of this Church referring to communion in ſome holy duty, as Chap. 1. Verſe 14. and Chap. 4. Verſe 24. is moſt unlikely. And *Solomons* Porch was a place large enough to hold them, and fitted for preaching and to hear, which in *John* 10. Verſe 22. is called *the Temple*; and ſo is the place intended in *Acts* 2. Verſe 46. *They met in the Temple*, that is, *in the Porch of Solomon*. It was the outer Court, as *Joſephus lib.* 20. *cap.* 8. It was the place where CHRIST uſed to *walk* and *preach*, and the Apoſtles alſo, *chap.* 3. *v.* 11. *The multitude ran to* Solomons *Porch*.

5. When again upon mention of this *multiplication* of Diſciples, the *Deacons* are to be choſen, the *Apoſtles called the multitude*, *chap.* 6. *v.* 2. and not perſons ſelected, but *all*; for *v.* 5. they are called [*the whole multitude*] and they are ſpoken to, as together, *For the ſaying pleaſed* [*the whole*] and *the* [*whole*] *choſe ſeven men out from among them, and ſet them before the Apoſtles*, *ver.* 6. as being *in one place* together, *and they prayed* (in which the multitude had an intereſt to joyne with them) *and laid on them hands*. And this meeting was certainly a *Church meeting*, and yet ſtill *in ſome one place*; and therefore though it might fall out that *alwayes* they ſhould *not* have met together in one, yet they both *did* and *could*.

6. *After* that great diſperſion mentioned, *chap.* 8. *v.* 1. Then as they might more conveniently meet in one place and aſſembly, ſo that they did ſo, it is as carefully recorded, that ſo the Holy Ghoſt might hold forth this from the *firſt unto the laſt* mention of this Church, *Act.* 15. *Act.* 21. 22. *The multitude muſt needs come together*. And to interpret ὁμοθυμαδὸν, or with one accord, which the *Holy Ghoſt* carries through all, to be intended of the joyning of the ſame perſons in the ſame act of worſhip (for which they ſtill did meet)

is genuine; for it imports *that which is the ſpirit and life of publick worſhip*, which of all other actions done by a multitude, is to have the neareſt *union of ſpirits*, as that wherein *the Communion of Saints in worſhip conſiſts.* And then naming *the place* where they met alſo, it muſt needs import *Oneneſſe* of Aſſembly which alſo holds forth in this example this duty: That as *Saints* when met *in worſhip* ſhould joyn with *one accord*, ſo living *in a place* together, ſhould as farre as poſſibly may, joyn themſelves *to one Aſſembly*: and this carries with it ſuch an appearance as is not in the other ſenſe. And that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould in the *ſame ſtory* of the *ſame Church* ſet forth the *unity* of their firſt meetings, as *in one* and the *ſame* individuall *Aſſembly*, by this expreſſion of being *in one*, and *with one accord*, *Act.* 1. 2. and in the next mention not far off, carry along one of the ſame expreſſions, namely [*with one accord*] and together therewith ſhall name the *place of their meeting*, and yet in the *latter* intend not *One*, but meetings in *ſeverall* companies in *that* place, This we humbly ſubmit to better judgements.

Secondly, *Exceptions.*

1. For the mention of *five thouſand*, Chap. 4. Verſe 4. This cannot be evinced from that place that the *five thouſand* were a *new* number added to the three thouſand. The words are theſe, *Howbeit many of them that heard the Word, beleeved*; *and the number of the men was about five thouſand.* But that this number of five thouſand ſhould refer to them *that believed*, is not certain; ſeeing both the Greek will bear it and favour it, as well to be meant of the number *that heard*, as of the men *that beleeved*; and of the two, that *former* is the more probable, that he ſhould ſay of the men *that heard* they were *five thouſand*, and that *of them that heard many beleeved*, this ſounds well, and is no way forced; but *five thouſand* men to be converted at once, is that which was never afore nor ſince. And the great *converſion* that our Divines have inſtanced in, is the *three thouſand*, *Acts* Chapter 2. and not in this *five thouſand.* And if the ſcope of the *Holy Ghoſt* therein, why the number of the men *that heard* ſhould be here reckoned to be *five thouſand*, be asked after, it was to ſhew what had occaſioned the *perſecution*, which he had ſpoken of, in the Verſe before. Namely *this*, that ſuch a *multitude* of the people ſhould be *taught* and *preached to*; this fretted the Phariſees that came upon *Peter* and *John*; and with this agrees the ſecond Verſe, that *they were grieved they taught the people*, the effect whereof is, that *many of them that heard beleeved*, notwithſtanding this perſecution; but how many of theſe is not certaine. And *Beza* and *Calvin* and

Beza in 1 Cor. 1. 13. *Steph. Budæus, Euſtath.*

and many others of our proteſtant Writers judge this number *not to be of this new acceſſion of Converts*, but *the totall number including the former*; and the ἀνδρῶν although tranſlated *men*, is when put alone (as there) all one with ἀνθρώπων, *Females* as well *as Males*; which eſpecially may be ſo taken, becauſe it is ſpoken of ſuch *a promiſcuous* auditory. And if any ſhould affirme it meant of *Males* onely, and them now converted, it would make a *greater* miracle then any other recorded, eſpecially when *the people* are ſaid to be converted verſe 2. that did alike run to ſee the Miracle.

2. *Exception* is, That it may be ſuppoſed that all that are mentioned to be converted, remained not *conſtant Members* of that Church abiding at *Jeruſalem* untill the *diſperſion*; and ſo, though the Holy Ghoſts ſcope may be to ſhew the *increaſe of Converts* to the faith, yet not of ſuch *as continued all that while at Jeruſalem*; and our *reaſons* for that are theſe.

Firſt, thoſe *three thouſand* who were converted, Ch. 2 were not *ſettled dwellers at Jeruſalem*, but *ſtrangers*, Commorants *of the ten Tribes*, which were *diſperſed* in all thoſe Countries mentioned in the 2. Chap Verſe 9. who came up to the *feaſt of Pentecoſt*, as the manner of the Jews was. *Acts* 21. 20, 27, 28. Jews that lived in *Aſia*, came to the feaſt of Pentecoſt as *Paul* alſo did, compared with *Acts* 20. 16. And the word which is tranſlated *Dwellers at Jeruſalem*, is interpreted by an eminent Critick, *Sojourners at Jeruſalem* during this Feaſt, (although the word ſignifies both) & to that end he quotes the *Septuagint* in 1 *Kings* 17. 20. where *Elijah* cries unto the Lord, ſaying, *O Lord my God, haſt thou alſo brought evill upon the Widow*, μετ' ἧς ἐγὼ κατοικῶ with whom *I ſojourne onely?* and that which confirmes it is, that they are ſaid to *be dwellers or inhabitants of Meſopotamia and Judea*, and *Cappadocia*, Verſ. 9. They could *not fixedly* belong *as dwellers* to both. They were therefore rather *ſojourners* in *Jeruſalem* now at the Feaſt, though *fixed dwellers* in all thoſe places: For if they were *fixed dwellers* in *Jeruſalem*, to what end whilſt they were at *Jeruſalem* ſhould the *Evangeliſt* tell us they were *ſojourners* in *Meſopotamia*? and they muſt needs rather be *dwellers* there, becauſe they are ſaid to underſtand *every one his own language*. And that which ſtrengthens this is, that in the Greek there is this difference in the words in verſes 5 and 9. in that they are ſaid κατοικοῦν ἐν ἱερουσαλὴμ *in Hieruſalem*, as for the preſent there: yea, and as *to come*, ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους *from out of every Nation*: but in the ninth Verſe he changeth it, and ſayes, κατοικοῦντες τὴν μεσοποταμίαν as *inhabiters* of *Meſopotamia*, and thoſe other Countries where *their fixed poſſeſſions* were. And therefore verſe 14. he cals them *Men*, Jews and Dwellers at Jerusalem, as two ſorts; and v. 22. *Men of Iſrael*, the ſtile given thoſe of the *ten Tribes* ſcattered; *Men devout*, as Verſe 5. who came up at thoſe ſolemne times, having wives and children and their families at home, to whom they uſed after a time to returne. Now although theſe were added

Mede Diatribe.

and

still made *members* of that Church, and are said to *continue in the Apostles doctrine*: yet that will not necessarily imply that they continued all the time till *the dispersion* at *Jerusalem*; but whilst they were there, they were προσκαρτεροῦντες, that is, *they cleaved to* the Apostles: but to think that *many* of them coming *as strangers* should not go down to their wives and children, which Nature taught them to provide for, and religion taught them to take care of their souls, or to fetch them up to them: so as this might well be a *fluid* Church, *ebbing* and *flowing* as touching the *residence* of its members: yea, some of these were of *Judea*, v. 9. and so of the Country about; and of them might be Churches erected in their proper dwellings is rationally supposable. For in that persecution, in *Act.* 8. 1. it is said that *Paul persecuted* Disciples in other places then at *Hierusalem*, Acts 26. 10. *Which things I also did at Hierusalem*, (saies he) and in other places, at *Damascus*. And also it is confirmed by this, that upon the ceasing of *Pauls* persecution it is said, *Act.* 9. 31. *then had the Churches rest through Judea and Galilee*, and are said to be *at rest* in distinction from the *persecution raised*, ch. 8. 1.

3 *Exception* is, that they in those *Countries* and *times* had often *great assemblies* consisting of *many thousands* hearers at once, that did and could hear, *Luke* 12. 1. Christ preached to *Myriads*, *many thousands*; and *Act.* 13. 44. *almost an whole City came to hear the word of God* by *Paul*. And at *Charenton*, how *many thousands may and do hear*, is well known; and so in many places of *England*. And *Moses* sometime spake *in the eares of all the people*, and so *Ezra* 10. 9, 10. And 'tis known by experience, that as in hot Countries they may see as far again, through the pureness of the aire, so they may hear at a far greater distance, then in our colder Climate.

4 *Exception* is, that this being the *first Church*, and whereof *all the Apostles were the Officers*, those therefore, that dwelt there, would certainly abide together as *one Church* without parting or dividing, even till they came to the utmost proportion that the constitution of a Church was capable of; and so *Maximum quod sic*: *And continue together in one*, for the more united strength and glory of holding forth the name of Christ in one body, united for the honour of Religion and communicating in Ordinances together.

5 *Exception* is, that they had during all this time of their multitudes untill the persecution of *Paul* arose, the greatest freedome and liberty even to the utmost; *for the people magnified them*, ch. 5. v. 12. *they had favour*

vour with all the people, ch. 2. v. 47. Insomuch, that although the Rulers fell upon two of them, *John* and *Peter*, yet they were enforced to let them go, *finding nothing how to punish them, because of the people*, chap. 4. v. 21. Besides that, it was no new thing amongst the Jewes for *Sects* to have great multitudes to follow and cleave to them, and to preach in any place, (as in *Spaine* and *Italy*) and to *baptize openly* as *John* and *Christ* did.

Reasons and Answers to the Appendix added to the former Proof, *viz.*

That the dispersion *mentioned in* Act. 8. 1. *doth not simply prove such a scattering, as that there might not remain more Congregations then one in that Church,* Act. 9. 31. & 12. 24. & 21. 20.

THus having shewed the *multitudes* not arising to that number, but, that *they might meet in one*: now *after* the *dispersion* much lesse. And to that end let the *greatnesse* of the *Persecution* be considered to demonstrate the *greatnesse* of this *dispersion*; Its called not a Persecution onely, but a *great Persecution*, both *extensively* and *intensively*; for the extent of it to all sorts of persons, *entring into every house*, vers. 3. and for the height of it, it being to *imprisonment, even unto death*, chap. 22. 4. *Acts* 26. 10. It is also called, *a making havock of the Church*, vers. 9. The *object* of this Persecution was not *Preachers* onely, but *Christians* of all sorts indifferently, for it is said indefinitely to be *upon the Church*, v. 1. and vers. 3. It is is call'd an entring into every house, *hayling men and women*: and in chap. 26. *Paul* speaking of this very Persecution (wherein he had a speciall hand) saies vers. 10. *that he imprisoned many of the Saints* (not Preachers only) and *ver.* 9. his aime was promiscuously against *the Name of* JESUS, and so *any* that professed his Name: Unto this end compare the *varying* the expression used by the *holy Ghost*, when speaking of this Persecution, and of another mentioned, *Act.* 12. 1. there it is said, *Herod stretched forth his hand to vex* CERTAIN *of the Church*; but here it is against the CHURCH in *Jerusalem, Men and women in every house. And* ALL *except the Apostles* (the word πλὴν [except] there is to shew, that none of the Apostles) *were scattered*, though the generality of

of others were; if men gifted fled away, then others alſo, except we ſuppoſe the *people* more *couragious* to ſtay by it then the *Teachers*. And whereas it is ſaid, that theſe that were diſperſed, *went about preaching the word*, verſ. 4. Firſt, it argueth not that *Preachers only* or *chiefly* were diſperſed; for (as *Calvin* ſaith) it comes in to ſhew what was the *fruit* of the diſperſion; and we may well ſuppoſe women and whole families to have been ſcattered abroad, who yet preached not: And ſecondly, it was ordinary in thoſe times, for men that were not *by Office Miniſters*, occaſionally to *teach* the *Word* in private waies of converſe, yea and otherwiſe; And *that* is not call'd *teaching* onely, which is by way of Sermon to a multihude, for *verſ.* 25. of this chap. *Philip* in *private* conference *taught* the *Eunuch*, as *Aquila* and *Priſcilla taught Apollos*; & they are not called Εὐαγγελισαὶ, *as having an Office*, but εὐαγγελιζόμενοι, as referring to the *act*, the *work* they did; And that the word ſeems to ſound as if they made it their work. It may well be attributed to the zeal of thoſe daies to gain Proſelites, and not to an Office committed to them; they went not forth by *miſſion* but *perſecution*. And here the *many Congregations* are brought but to an (*it might be*) and the grand Propoſition it ſelf, is but an (*it may be*) And how can *it may be*, be proved by an *it might be?* eſpecially in ſuch things as need have a ſtrong foundation for matters, upon which *ſo great alterations* are like to be made.

" But it is ſaid, *that it appears that there were multitudes of believers* " *there after that time*, by Acts 9.31. & 12.24. & 21.20.

Firſt, For *Act.* 9. 31. πλῆθυνεν, ſignifies not ordinarily a great *number made up*, but an *increaſe* (*Mat.* 21. 12. & 1 *Pet.* 1.2. *Grace be multiplied*, it is the ſame word) not in number, but in *meaſure*. Again, they are the Churches of *Judea*, *Galilee*, and of *Samaria*. But what is all this to prove that there *were ſo many* in the Church of *Hieruſalem* as could not *meet in one?*

For *Acts* 21. 20. πόσαι μυριάδες *how many thouſands* doth not argue it; For firſt it was the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*: when *Paul* came now up to *Hieruſalem* in *Acts* 20.16. it is ſaid of this journey, that *he haſted if poſſible, to be at Hieruſalem upon the day of Pentecoſt*: When the *Jewes* out of all quarters came to *Hieruſalem*, and the great concourſe that then would be there at the Feaſt, moved him to aime to be there at that time. And by the journall of *Paul* thither, from his firſt ſetting out

from *Philippi*, *chap.* 20. *v.* 6. (which was when the Paſſeover was ended, eight weeks before this enſuing Feaſt of *Penteceſt*) and alſo by computing the daies of his travailing, which the Holy Ghoſt hath recorded, *verſ.* 16. 21. *Acts* 21. 2. it appears he came in few weeks unto *Tyre*, (but forty miles off from *Hieruſalem*) time enough to come to the Feaſt; and no wonder if at *the Feaſt he found thouſands of the Jewes*. And this is confirmed by the 27 *verſe*, for *the Jewes* which *laid hold on him in the Temple*, were as it is ſaid, *Jewes of Aſia*, not of *Judea*. Secondly, the word μυριας, being put without any other word of number, ſignifies no more then a *great multitude*, as μέγιστον πλῆθος; or *a greatneſſe*, as ἐν μυρίᾳ πενία as *Plato* hath it; and being put *indefinitely*, is all one to ſay *thouſands*, or *many*; as the Latins alſo uſe a definite for an indefinite, as *Sexcenta poſſum proferre decreta*, as *Tully* ſpeaks.

To the ſecond Proof of the firſt head.

By the many Apoſtles and other Preachers in this *Church of Hieruſalem*; *For if there were but one Congregation, then each Apoſtle preached but ſeldome, which will not ſtand with Acts* 6. 2.

Firſt, *For the Apoſtles.*

THey took *all opportunities* to fill their hands with work, *preaching daily in the Temple and in every houſe*, Acts 5. 42. ch. 2. 46. *Paul* alſo taught in *Epheſus*, as, *publickly* in the Congregation, ſo, *from houſe to houſe*. *Act.* 20. 20. Alſo when any in the places abroad in *Judea*, or elſe where, were converted (and many Churches were then erected in *Judea*) the *Apoſtles went abroad*, as *chap.* 8. ſhews; and beſides, how were the *twelve* imployed, when for forty daies they met in an upper room, *Act.* 1. and had but an *hundred and twenty* for their flock.

Secondly, *For the many Teachers.*

In thoſe times there were many *guifted men* that were *not Officers*, who occaſionally inſtructed others, as *Aquila* did *Apollos*: yea thoſe guifts

guifts were ſo plentiful, that in *that* one Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 23. almoſt all of them had *Doctrines*, *Prophecying*, *ſpeaking with tongues*, and yet theſe were not Officers: ſo as if Congregations ſhould be multiplied according to the number of ſuch guifted men, then there would have been almoſt *as many teachers as members* of Congregations. And the *pouring out of the Holy Ghoſt*, which was more ordinary then, did not make every man a Teacher by Office, for then *all* thoſe in *Samaria* ſhould have been *made Teachers*, Acts 8. And that *not any* of theſe were *in Office*, ſeems evident by this; That when the *Deacons* were choſen, *chap.* 6. there is no mention made *of Elders* in their *Ordination*, in which if any *Elders* had been, they had had an intereſt: We read *Acts* 15. When there were *Elders*, though *Apoſtles* were alſo then in that Church, *both* are mentioned together. And it appears the *Apoſtles* had managed all the affaires of that Church untill then: thoſe *Deacons* being the *firſt choice* of any ſort of *Officers*: the work of *Adminiſtration* of all ſorts having layen on the *Apoſtles* hands.

To the third Proof of the firſt Head.

The diverſity of Languages amongſt the Believers, Acts 2. 8, 9, 10, 11. & Acts *the 6. doth argue more Congregations then one in the Church of* Hieruſalem.

FIrſt, 'tis true, there were, in that 2. of the *Acts*, *Out of all Nations* that heard the Apoſtles ſpeak in the ſoverall languages of the Countries they were born in; but yet theſe were all either Jewes or Proſelites, *viz.* worſhippers, as *v.* 5. who came up to worſhip, and ſome parts of the *Worſhip* were *audible*; and though borne in other Countries (the Jewes being diſperſed) yet all were generally *learn'd and underſtood* the *Hebrew tongue*, the language of their own Nation, even as to this day the Jewes and their Children doe; which ſeems evident from the ſtory in the 20, 21, & 22. *chap.* of the *Acts*, *Paul* came up with divers *Grecians* to the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, *chap.* 20. *v.* 4. unto which the Jewes out of *all* quarters came, and being all at a ſolemn meeting in the Temple, *chap.* 21. *ver.* 27. The *Jewes* out of *Aſia*, *ſtrangers*, ſtirred up *all* the people againſt him; and when, *ch.* 22. *v.* 2. *He made a ſpeech to them, and they heard he*

ſpake the Hebrew tongne, they kept ſilence and heard him patiently: And further thoſe mentioned, *Act.* 2. did *underſtand all* of them *Peters* Sermon; and though others ſpake, beſides *Peter* to them in *their* own language *the wonderfull things of God*, yet that was but a preparatory ſigne to them; as 1 *Cor.* 14. 22. making way for their Converſion, *v.* 11, 12. & 13. but the *means* of their *Converſion* was *Peters Sermon* after; and it was *he* alſo, that gave direction to them all what *to doe to be ſaved*: and therefore it muſt be ſpoken in ſome one common tongue, they all *underſtood*; and thoſe gifts of languages given to the Apoſtles, were not out of a neceſſity to inſtruct theſe *new* Converts onely, but to fit them when they ſhould go abroad into all the world, and to be *a ſigne* to the *Jewes* at preſent to convince them.

Secondly, for the *Grecian* Widows, *Acts* 6. the *Helleniſts* that lived amongſt the Jewes, might well be ſuppoſed to underſtand *Hebrew*; and that theſe had not ſeverall Congregations from the reſt, appears by this, That the *whole* multitude together met, and choſe the *Deacons*, It was a joint act: And if of differing languages, wherein the one underſtand not the other, occaſioning ſuch a diſtinction of Congregations (as the Proof would hold forth) how could they all have agreed in *one meeting* on the *ſame man*? But the Argument as well holds againſt the *Preſbyteriall Aſſociation of thoſe Congregations into one Church, people and Elders*, unto which and in the communion and exerciſe whereof ſuch Correſpondencies and Intercourſes are needfull, as they require *one common language*.

To the ſecond Branch of this Argument.

That all theſe Congregations were under one Presbyteriall Government.

PROOFS.

1. *Becauſe they were but one Church.*

Though it be one, yet they not being more then could meet in one, the Argument concludes not.

2 Proof. *The Elders of that Church are mentioned.*

There is no mention of any *Elders* in this Church, untill *after* the aforeſaid *Diſperſion*, *Act.* 8. And ſo the weight of this Argument will depend

pend upon the proof of this; *That after the diſperſion there were many Congregations,* which the *Reverend Aſſembly* doth not *ſo poſitively affirm.* The proof of their being *ſuch a Preſbytery* (as the Propoſition intends) doth depend upon this their being *called Elders to that Church:* we no where read them called a *Preſbytery,* & *that* therefore *they are Elders,* but they are THEREFORE *a Preſbytery* (as here it is argued) becauſe *they are Elders to that Church;* Now if they be *Elders in common, becauſe a Preſbytery,* (as was ſaid in anſwer to our firſt Argument) then they are not to be argued *a Preſbytery* only, becauſe *they are Elders in common*; For then the Argument runs *in Circulo.* And the *chief and firſt reaſon* of their *being* Elders (for no other is mentioned) is accordingly held forth in their *being* Elders to that Church *in common,* whereas according to *Preſbyteriall Principles,* there is a *primary relation of Elders, quâ Elders,* to their *particular fixed Congregations.*

Reaſons againſt the *third proof* of the ſecond Branch, *viz.*

That the Apoſtles *did the ordinary Acts of Presbyters* as Presbyters *in the Church of* Hieruſalem, *doth prove a Presbyteriall Government in that Church before the diſperſion.*

THE *Proof of the whole depends upon this Propoſition:* for though before *the diſperſion* there had been *many* Congregations, yet *not under Elders, but Apoſtles.*

Now it is granted that the *ſubſtance* of *Miniſteriall* Acts were *one* and the *ſame* in *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts* who were extraordinary, and in *other ordinary Miniſters.* But firſt, though for the *Act* of Miniſteriall power, it was the ſame in the Apoſtles, and them, yet in *the extent of power* (which is the point in queſtion) therein the *Apoſtles juriſdiction* over *many* Congregations is not the pattern of *Presbyteriall Elders* over many. For the *Apoſtles power was univerſall over all Churches,* and upon that was founded their power over thoſe Congregations *ſuppoſed many*; And *Epiſcopacy* may as ſtrongly argue and infer, that becauſe in *Crete* (by Apoſtolicall warrant) *one man* [*Titus*] did *ordain Elders, &c.* That therefore there may be *one man* [*a Biſhop*] that hath power to ordain, &c. in and over *ſeveral* Churches. And this Argument wil be ſtronger from the inſtance

inſtance of an *Evangeliſt* for *Epiſcopall* power, then this of *Apoſtolicall* government, for the *Preſbyteriall*, by how much it is the more *inferior* Office, but that of the *Apoſtles* is more *immediate* and *tranſcendent*, and ſo the power of an *Evangeliſt* is neerer to an ordinary ſucceſſion; and it will as well follow, that any *one Preſbyter alone* might govern *many Congregations*, becauſe *one of theſe Apoſtles might*, as that becauſe the *Apoſtles* did *govern theſe joyntly*, that therefore *many Preſbyters* over *ſeverall* Congregations may.

Secondly, each of theſe *Apoſtles*, as he had by vertue of his *Apoſtolicall Commiſſion* the power of them *all*, ſo he had *relation of Miniſtery* unto *all* theſe *ſuppoſed Congregations*, unto every perſon thereof for the performance of all ſorts of duties, of preaching to them, admoniſhing them, &c. But thus in the *Preſbyteriall government* over many Congregations fixed, and their *Paſtors* and *Elders fixed* to them, the *ſeverall Elders* are denied to have the relation of *Elders to each* Congregation, but make up only an *Elderſhip in common* as united over all theſe. But the Apoſtles here have the relation to both. And therefore if this *Apoſtolicall frame* be made a *Pattern*, then it follows that *all the Elders* of theſe Congregations were directly and immediatly *Elders to each* Congregation and *every member* of them, and not only of a *common Preſbytery*, for ſo the Apoſtles were.

If it be alleaged that theſe acts of government, performed by them in that Church, were for the ſubſtance of them ordinary Acts, ſuch as Preſbyters perform, and that therefore anſwerably their perſons themſelves are in them to be conſidered as Elders, becauſe that the Apoſtles were not only Apoſtles, but Elders alſo, as 2 Ioh. 1. *&* 1 Pet. 5. 1. *and therefore might and did act as Elders in ordinary acts of Church government, & are therfore therein to be look't at as a juſt pattern to us, & to have ruled theſe Congregations of* Ieruſalem *as a College or body of Elders united, conſcending ſo to act as common Preſbyters taking the conſent of the Church, as* Act. 6. *as likewiſe they did in every Church where they came joyning with the Elderſhip thereof, as Elders, and not as Apoſtles, and therefore that they might give a pattern, and Example of an ordinary Preſbytery, eſpecially ſeeing that what they thus did, they did as an united body to many Congregations conſidered as one Church.*

It is anſwered *to the firſt*, that although the *Apoſtles* are called *Elders*, yet they are ſo called *virtually*, not *formally*, and but becauſe *Apoſtleſhip* contains *all Offices* in it; ſo as they are *Elders* but upon this ground, *that they are Apoſtles*: and therefore *John* in that very Epiſtle where

where he ſtiles himſelf *an Elder*, he yet writes *Canonicall Scripture* as an *Apoſtle*, and takes on him to threaten *Diotrephes*, as an Apoſtle, to *remember* him, which as a *formall Elder* he could not have done; and ſurely thoſe Offices which Chriſt diſtinguiſheth, *Epheſ.* 4. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Paſtors and Teachers*, the ſame perſon is not *formally* both, though virtually he may be. All that they did in that Church of *Jeruſalem* they are ſaid to act AS APOSTLES, their *preaching* is called the APOSTLES DOCTRINE, their *bringing* their *monies* to them, as to the Officers of that Church, is to them *not as Elders*, but as *Apoſtles*, *They laid it down at the* APOSTLES FEET; yea in that Act of *ordaining* the 7 *Deacons*, it is ſaid, *they ſet them* AFORE THE APOSTLES (*c.*6.*c.*) *& they laid on their hands*; And it is very hard to diſtinguiſh and ſay that the *men* were *Apoſtles*, but the *power* they acted by, was *as Elders*, when the name of an Apoſtle imports the Office. Yea in that the very *Act* of government about *Deacons* they muſt needs act *as Apoſtles*: for they do not ſimply *ordain* the men, but do anew, by vertue of Apoſtolicall authority, *inſtitute the Office of Deacons* by declaring Chriſts mind, which none but *Apoſtles* could immediatly and at firſt have done; ſo as the *ſame* perſons in this *ſame* Act inſtanced in, muſt act *partly as Apoſtles*, and *partly as Elders*, and by what infallible rule ſhall we *diſtinguiſh*?

To the ſecond, *viz.* That *they acted here as it were in a joint body or in Collegio over theſe many Congregations.* It is anſwered, that an *Aſſociation of Elders* in an Elderſhip over many is not argued from hence. For *firſt*, they had *all ſingly* the ſame power which they exerciſed joyntly, and that they ſhould exerciſe it joyntly here to that end to give *a pattern for Elderſhip*, is not eaſie to prove. They exerciſed it together, becauſe it fell out that they were together; and it was fit none of them ſhould be excluded: but it depended not upon this *union* of *all* in a *body*, as Acts of *Elders* in a *Preſbytery* do. As Parliamentary power is not the reſult of Parliament men, but as aſſembled in Parliament; yea and the authority of Iuriſdiction thence ariſeth: not ſo here, *One* Apoſtle might have done that which *all* here did. Yea may it not be ſaid that becauſe *two* Apoſtles, *Paul* & *Barnabas*, ordained *Elders in every Church*, Act. 14. as joyned in the ſame Act, and ſo acting not *as Apoſtles*, but joyntly, that therefore *two Elders aſſociated may do the like*? *Secondly*, it is hard to ſuppoſe that theſe *Apoſtles*, when *all* together, ſhould act with an *inferior power* to what they put forth in a like caſe *alone*. If *Peter* had been himſelf *alone* in a Church new planted; then, and there, he muſt be ſuppoſed to act as an Apoſtle, becauſe he alone governed: And ſhall theſe Apoſtles, when they are all in one and joyne all together in one Act, be yet ſuppo-

ſed to fall lower in their power under the *formall* exerciſe of it? *Thirdly*, if they had acted as *Elders in a Colledge*, they might *miſcarry* as Elders doe; and ſo the *minor* part of them have been ſubject to *Excommunication* of the *greater*. And what power was there on earth to have excommunicated an *Apoſtle* who held his Office *immediatly* from *Chriſt*, and who whilſt he was in that Office had *power* over *all* Churches?

To the third, *viz.* That *they in their proceedings did joyne with others. As in this choice of the Deacons they did joyne with the multitude, as alſo when they came to any other Churches they uſed to do.* Neither doth that argue, that they acted not *as Apoſtles*, but *as Elders*. For *firſt*, they joyned in Acts *with others*, and joyned *others* with themſelves, wherein they yet *acted as Apoſtles*; thus in writing Scripture they joyned others with them, as *Paul* joyned *Silvanus* and *Timotheus* in his Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*; and not meerly in the *ſalutation*, for the expreſſions run in their names alſo in that Epiſtle. And *Act.* 15. *The Apoſtles, Elders*, yea and *Brethren* joyned in a Letter to the Churches; But theſe *as Apoſtles* (therefore *ſo* called in *diſtinction* from the *Elders*) and the reſt according to their ſeverall intereſts: as the *Brethren* did all according to their intereſts, ſo the *Elders* and the *Apoſtles* in theirs. So in ordaining *Timothy* the *Preſbytery* laid on hands, yet they as a *Preſbytery* and *Paul* as an Apoſtle: for elſe a *Preſbytery* had not had power to ordain an *Evangeliſt*. Yet ſecondly, the *Apoſtles* did where ever they came leave the *Elders* and *people* to the exerciſe of that *right* belonged to them, although they joyned with them; neither did therein lie their *Apoſtolicall* authority, to doe *all alone*; for then they ſeldome or never acted *as Apoſtles* in Churches: *Paul* alone excommunicated not that Corinthian, and yet as an Apoſtle wrote to have it done by them, (for it was Canonicall Scripture) and therefore although that this Church of *Jeruſalem* ſhould chuſe their *Deacons*, is a juſt example of *the priviledge of a Church* (for if the *Apoſtles* when they were preſent allowed this intereſt to Churches, then *Elders* ſhould much more) yet what the *Apoſtles* did by an *Apoſtolicall* power in theſe Congregations, *cannot be drawn into example* for Officers, in *that thing* wherein their *power Apoſtolicall* lay, *which was to exerciſe acts of juriſdiction in ſeverall Churches.*

Neither *fourthly*, will that help it, *That they exerciſed this Government in theſe Congregations* (ſuppoſed many) *as conſidered to be one Church.* For if they acted not *as Elders*, then the correlate to it, namely, *Church*, could not be conſidered as *Preſbyteriall*.

Reaſons

Reaſons againſt the fourth and laſt Proof of the ſecond Branch, *viz.*

That the Elders did meet together for Acts of Government, Act. 11.ult.& 15.4. 6.22.& 21.17,18.

FIrſt, *the Argument* from *Act.* 11. *ult.* lies thus, *There were Elders in* Iudea *that received Almes, v.*29.30. compared: *Therefore the Elders of* Ieruſalem *did meet together of Acts for Government.* In this Argument, as the *perſons* are miſtaken, ſo the *Act*: for the Elders of *Jeruſalem* are not mentioned, but of *Judea*, as by comparing *v.* 29. 30. it appears. And by this it might be as well argued, that *the Elders* in *Judea* met for *Preſbyteriall Government*, as that the Elders of *Jeruſalem*; ſeeing their *Almes* were carried to the Elders of *Judea*, as it is there ſaid. The *receiving Almes* (which is the only *Act* that is mentioned) was not an Act of Government, for *Deacons* may meet to receive *Almes*, and yet meet not for *Acts of government.*

For that ſecond place mentioned, *Act.* 21. 20. where it is ſaid, *Paul came to* Iames, *and all the Elders were preſent*: although we read that all the Elders were preſent, yet that they met for Acts of Presbyteriall government, appears not; the *occaſion* of the meeting was *Pauls entertainment*, whom ſome of the *Brethren* had received at his firſt coming, *v.*17. and now the *Elders* meet to receive him alſo. A Chriſtian duty of love and reſpect due to ſo great and famous an *Apoſtle*. And *Paul* went not as *cited*, but *to viſit and ſalute* them, as *v.*19. Secondly, the *Acts* that paſſed were none of them *Preſbyteriall*, for *Paul* gave them an *Hiſtoricall relation* of what things *God had wrought* by his Miniſtery, the matter of which relation was intended to provoke them as *Brethren* and *fellow-labourers*, to *glorifie God* (as *v.* 20. is ſaid they did) and not to give them an *account*, as to a *Conſiſtory*, that met for *Government*. Such narrations the Apoſtles made even to whole Churches, as *Paul* and *Barnabas* at *Antioch*, Act. 14.27. *When they had gathered the whole Church together* (which Church was of no more then to meet in one Aſſembly) they rehearſed in like manner, as here, all that *God had done* by them: and how he had opened *a dore of Faith to the Gentiles*. Neither will *the advice* they gave to *Paul* to prevent *the ſcandall and offence* the people would take at him, argue *authority*, much leſſe *government*: Neither was there any Act of *Government* put forth over *their own Churches* if ſuppoſed many.

Reaſons againſt the alledging, Act. 15. *for the meeting of the Elders of* Jeruſalem, *For Presbyteriall Acts of Government.*

1. IF it were a meeting of Elders for *Acts of Government*, then it was a *Presbyteriall* meeting for Acts of Government: But that it was no ſuch meeting appears, becauſe there was nothing done in it, that may ſeem to have any *bond* in it, but ſuch as bound the Churches of *Antioch, Syria, Cilicia,* as much as *Jeruſalem,* but this cannot be any *Presbyteriall* meeting, for *Acts of Government:* For ſuch meetings have only *authoritative power over their own Church.*

2. The *ſcope* and *end* of this meeting was to give *ſatisfaction* to the *offended* Brethren of *Antioch,* and *dogmatically* to *declare* their judgements in a difficult caſe of Conſcience, not to put forth any Act of *Juridicall power* upon any, as appears in the *matter* of their debate, and the *iſſue* of all. Of which more fully afterward. And if it be ſaid that *Peter reproved* ſome of their own *Members* preſent, ſuch as had taught the neceſſity of the Ceremoniall Law, *Why tempt you God, &c.* This was not delivered as an *Act of Government formally,* by any vote of the *Presbytery,* but in the way of *Diſcourſe.*

"But it was affirmed *to be ſufficient to confirme the Propoſition, if it be a* "*Synodicall meeting.*

Presbyteriall and *Synodicall* both it cannot be. For *Synods,* they are (or ought to be) *extraordinary* and *occaſionall: Presbyteries* are *ſtanding* and *ordinary.* Synods are made up of *Commiſſioners* ſent from Presbyteries, and Presbyteries are made up of *the Elders* of particular Congregations. The *Members of Synods* are Elders of ſuch Churches which are (according to the principles of Presbyteriall Government) *compleat* Churches, having full power of juriſdiction for all *Acts of Government* within themſelves; but the *members of Presbyteries* are Elders of ſuch Congregations which are neither compleat Churches, nor have within themſelves full and compleat power. And theſe cannot be one. The Elders of the *Presbytery* at *Jeruſalem,* (when this once became *a Synod by the addition* of the Elders of other Churches) ceaſed to be any longer a *Presbytery* to that Church, and muſt become with them *a new body to all* the Churches theſe other Elders did come from. And then to argue theſe Acts done by theſe (becauſe the Elders of *Jeruſalem* were preſent and Members of this Synod) were Presbyteriall Acts of the Elders of *Jeruſalem,* is all one

as to go about to argue from the *Acts of Government* put forth by a *Parliament* at *Weſtminſter*, to the power of the *Burgeſſes* and Common Councell of *the City* of *Weſtminſter*, becauſe there the Parliament ſits, and the *Burgeſſes* of that City are parts and *members* of that Parliament. Or, as if all the Kingdome were governed by *County Courts*; and out of thoſe County Courts, Knights, and Burgeſſes ſhould be choſen to make up a *Parliament*, when the Parliament is met, there can be no Argument drawn from the *power of a Parliament* to prove the power of a *County Court*. Or from the power of a *County Court* to prove the power of a *Parliament*. Thus *Synods* are made out of *Preſbyteries*, therefore we cannot argue from the power of Presbyteries to the power of Synods.

But ſecondly, we deny it to have been ſuch an ordinary *formall Synod*. The juriſdiction of Synods is founded upon this neceſſary requiſite thereunto, That there be *Commiſſioners* from *all* thoſe Churches repreſenting them, *preſent*, or *called* to be ſo. And the power of the juriſdiction *cannot reach* nor extend *further* then to ſuch Churches as *have ſent* Commiſſioners thereunto. The weight then of this *Synodicall power* depends on the proof of this, *That all thoſe Churches ſent Commiſſioners to this Aſſembly*, which if either it be not proved, or the contrary thereunto found true, the authority of thoſe decrees (as *from thoſe Elders* here) will prove, *not* to have been *Acts of Government*, further then the *Apoſtles authority*, who joyned in it, was ſtamped on it. To affirme that Commiſſioners from them all were preſent, *becauſe the decrees did bind them*, is to begge what is denyed, when another juſt reaſon may be given of their binding, if any ſuch authority were in them: and our *Reaſons* to the contrary are theſe.

Firſt, We find a deep ſilence about it: For we read but *only of two Churches* between whom it was tranſacted, they of *Antioch* ſending to *Jeruſalem*, and their Elders there, *Chap.* 14.27,28. compared with *chap.* 15. 2,3. and the Meſſengers which were ſent from this Aſſembly going only to *Antioch*, v. 30,31. as thoſe who were chiefly troubled; only the benefit redounded to all they wrote to: yea, although *Paul* came through *Phenice* and *Samaria*, ver. 3. yet we read not a word of *any* of the Churches of thoſe parts, their ſending of any Commiſſioners unto this Synod, as had it been intended ſuch, certainly they would: and there was this *ſpeciall reaſon*, why thoſe of *this* Church were thus electively ſent unto, becauſe they were the *Mother Church* from *whom the Word of God came*, and *from whom* thoſe *men that troubled them had gone forth*, and had pretended to teach what they *had received* from them; and beſides they were in an eſpeciall manner verſed in this queſtion, it being about the

obſervation of their law; and there alſo ſome of the Apoſtles were pre-
ſent, (how many we know not, for diſperſed they had been long before)
and if any number of others out of thoſe other parts of *Judea*, had come
up hither, it would have been ſaid, as *Act.* 11. *ult.* *The Elders of Judea*,
not onely *of Jeruſalem*; yea, it is not ſo much as ſaid, that *they*, that were
ſent from *Antioch*, were *of the Elders of that Church*, but that they ſent
Paul and *Barnabas*, and *certaine others* of them.

And ſecondly, *the contrary* ſeemes cleere: namely, that thoſe *Letters*
and *Decrees* were written and ſent *onely* from the Elders of *Jeruſalem*,
and not from *all* thoſe Churches: For firſt, the Decrees are every where
attributed to the Elders in *Jeruſalem*, So *Chap.* 16. 4. *The Decrees of the*
Apoſtles and Elders in Jeruſalem. πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν ἱερουσαλὴμ. Now the
uſuall ſtile of the New Teſtament, is by way of diſtinction of Churches to
ſay the *Church in ſuch a place*, the *Elders in ſuch a place*, as the Church of
Antioch, *Act.* 13. 1. and the Church at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. and by the
like reaſon the Elders in ſuch a place do ſignifie the *proper Elders* of the
Church in that place or City, whileſt but one, and therefore, if by the
Elders in *Jeruſalem*, had been meant in this place onely the Elders met
from all Quarters at *Jeruſalem*, as *the place of that Aſſembly*, there had
been a great ambiguity, ſeeing the more uſuall and proper import of that
expreſſion is to note out *the fixed* ſtanding *Elders* of a place, and the
Church *in a place*. Again, ſecondly, in the fourth verſe *Paul* and *Barna-*
bas are ſaid to *be received of the Church and Apoſtles and Elders*, namely
of *Jeruſalem*, as in particular relation to it. Yea, thirdly, the ſtanding El-
ders of that place aſſumed to themſelves to have written the *Decree*,
Chap. 21. 25. *As touching the Gentiles* wee *have written and concluded*.
Fourthly, and accordingly the concluſion of their Letter is made the ſpe-
ciall Act of that Church, and the Elders thereof, *ver.* 22. It pleaſed the
Apoſtles and Elders with the whole Church (that is) of *Jeruſalem*, as *ver.* 4.
to ſend choſen men, and the Letters run thus, *The Apoſtles, Elders and Bre-*
thren. Fifthly, the matter of the Letter argues it, *v.* 24. *Forasmuch as cer-*
tain that went out from us have troubled you with words, to whom we gave
no ſuch commandement. How could this be ſaid by a Synod of the Elders
of *thoſe* Churches, which were *themſelves troubled* by them? It is mani-
feſt therefore they came out from this Church of *Jeruſalem*, who wrote
this, and they pretended the *Apoſtles Doctrine*; which is called a *Com-*
mandement, becauſe the Apoſtles taught no other, then *what Chriſt com-*
manded, as *Mat.* 28. *ult.* And to ſay the Denomination was from the
more eminent part, namely, the *Elders* of *that* Church had been derog-
tory to the Synod, if it had been ſuch a meeting. And ſixthly, if the El-
ders

ders of all thoſe Churches had been preſent, there had been leſſe need for the Apoſtles and Elders of *Jeruſalem* to have ſent *choſen* men to carry the Letters, and withall to ſhew the grounds of thoſe their judgements by word of mouth, *ver.*23.27.31. This needed not, if their own Elders had been preſent, and ſo had been to have returned; and if they were ſent as Meſſengers from *the Synod*, then to *all* the Churches as well as to *Antioch*, and why doe they then go no further then unto *Antioch? ver.*33. Yea, and although *Paul* and *Barnabas* delivered thoſe reſults to all the Cities, yet, as it ſhould ſeem accidentally and not Principally intended, they goe not on purpoſe chiefely to deliver thoſe decrees, but *ver.* 36. of *Chap.* 15. it was *Pauls* motion *upon other grounds* to go *viſit the Churches* in every City, where they had Preached, and ſo but occaſionally delivered theſe Decrees, *Chap.* 16. 4. So as they came to them, not as ſent in a mandatory way, as to Churches *ſubject* to that Synod by a Synodicall Law, (as ſuch Canons are uſed to be ſent) but as the *judgement* onely of that Church; and the Apoſtles delivered them for their edification.

And in the third place, If there were any further *authority* or *juriſdiction* in their Decrees, *it was from the Apoſtles*, who were preſent and concurred in it, and who had *power* over *all* the Churches. And accordingly though the Elders in the whole Church were preſent and joyned with the Apoſtles, *Quantum in ſe*, to conſent and approve their Decrees with that ſeverall *reſpective kinde of judgment proper* unto them, yet *all the authority* put forth over theſe Churches was that tranſcendent authority of the Apoſtles, which is not now left in *all* the Elders of the world joyned togeather; and that therefore theſe Decrees made, and the deciſion of theſe queſtions here, were by infallible Apoſtolicall authority: And to that end they ſubjoyned that Apoſtolicall Seale, *It ſeemed good to us and the holy Ghoſt.* And although the *ordinary Elders*, yea, and the whole Church *joyned* in this, yet but according to their *Meaſure*, *Analogie*, and *Proportion* of their faith, (even as in writing ſome Epiſtles *Timothy* and *Silvanus* joyned with *Paul*, but yet *Paul* onely wrote Apoſtolically, and the *authority* in them is looked at as *his*;) or elſe becauſe perhaps they having the *holy Ghoſt* falne on them through the Apoſtles Doctrine then delivered, (which was then uſuall) perſwading their hearts unanimouſly (though afore diſſenting, as *ver.*25.) to accord; in that reſpect they might ſpeak this *in ſuch a ſenſe*, that *no aſſembly* of men wanting Apoſtolicall preſence and inſtruction, may now ſpeak. And although it may be objected, *That then this Letter and theſe Decrees ſhould bee formall Scripture, and ſo binde us ſtill*, it is anſwered; That they are Scripture, and written for our learning; and if the caſe were the ſame upon which they obliged

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them then, (*viz.* matter of offence) that then they would binde us now but the things being enjoyned, but as ἐπάναγκες, things of a *ſuper-addi* caſuall neceſſity and not abſolute, in caſe of *offence* onely and not ſimpl for the things themſelves, therefore now the neceſſity being ceaſed, th obligation ceaſeth: yet ſo as the equity of the rule and ground the were commanded upon, *to abſtain from things that offend our brethr* doth hold in like caſes to the end of the world.

And laſt of all, there is no act *of ſuch authority & government* put forth in it, *which* the *Propoſition intendeth*; which will appear, if we either co ſider the *occaſion and riſe of it*, or the *iſſue and reſult of it*.

It was not a ſet ſtated meeting by common agreement of the Chu ches, but *Antioch* ſends to *Jeruſalem* unknown to them; there are n ſummons ſent to ſend up Delinquents, nor can we finde theſe diſturbe are ſent to *Jeruſalem* to be cenſured by thoſe *Eccleſiaſticall puniſhmen* in which *Government* doth properly lie and conſiſt; The ſubject ma ter ſent to them for their deciſion was meerly matter of *Doctrine, abo this queſtion, verſe* 2. *and about this word, verſe* 5. Namely, whether th *Cerèmoniall* Law was *to be obſerved?* Concerning which they wro their judgements *dogmatically*, which they were called to doe, being th ſent unto. Neither doth it argue that it was more then to determi this queſtion doctrinally they came up for, becauſe that *Paul* and *Barn bas* could have decided that before, (being themſelves Apoſtles) and th therefore their comming up was for *diſcipline* againſt Delinquents: f as the caſe ſtood, they liſtned not to *Paul* and *Barnabas* as Apoſtles, b pretended the judgement of the other Apoſtles; For indeed *Paul* a *Barnabas* did declare their judgements, (The σύνοδος, or *contention, ver.* being attributed unto them as contending againſt the falſe Teachers f the Truth) and ſo as even the Church of *Antioch* reſted not in the deciſion: Otherwiſe *Paul* and *Barnabas* might have *as Apoſtles cenſur* thoſe Delinquents without comming to *Jeruſalem*, as well as by Apoſt lique authority have decided the queſtion: For Apoſtolicall power e tended to *Diſciſline* as well as Doctrine. If it be ſaid, *That even a Elrinally to deliver the truth when it is done by a company of Elders, ha Authority or Power in it*, as when Chriſt ſaid, *Goe and teach, all p wer is given me:* It is granted an *Authority* exerciſed in doctri and ſo to be in Synods, but yet not *Juriſdiction*, which the Propo ſition intends, which is when doctrines are delivered *ſub pœna*, unde the *penalty* of that Eccleſiaſticall puniſhment of *Excommunication* if no received. One Miniſter alone hath a dogmaticall authority *as a Min ſter* to rebuke, exhort, and yet acts of *Juriſdiction* are not *his alone*, b of others conjoyned with him.

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Neither, ſecondly, doth the *titles* given to theſe *reſults* of theirs argue a *Juriſdiction* in that they are called τὰ δόγματα and τὰ κεκριμένα *Act.* 16. 4. For although the word δόγμα is uſed for an *Imperiall decree*, *Luk.* 2. 1. yet but rarely, & more commonly (as *Stephanus* and *Budeus* obſerve) for *doctrine* and *opinion* in matters morall or ſpeculative, as *Platinis Dogma*, *&c.* and thence is tranſlated to import the *Judgements of Divines* given, in matters Theologicall, although delivered with certainty. And ſo the uſing of this word implyeth the *ſubject* to have been *doctrinall* onely and ſo delivered. And further the *ſubject matter* of this deciſion being about rules and *ceremonies*, and the *not obſervation* of them, the [*Dogma*] is elegantly, and perhaps on purpoſe, given to theſe Apoſtolicall Canons by way of oppoſition and contradiction *to thoſe* that taught and obſerved ſuch rules, who are ſaid δογματίζειν in ſo doing, *Coloſ.* 2. 20. being led away by the falſe *Dogmata*, or *Heterodox theſes* of falſe Teachers that enjoyned them. And for that other word κεκριμένα tranſlated [*ordained.*] it plainly notes out but this, that theſe, doctrinall *Theſes* were the *ſame* declared and a vowed *judgement* and concluſions of theſe (and ſo anſwereth to thoſe other words in their letters, [*It ſeemed good unto us, being with one accord, &c.*] Apoſtles and Elders thus met with *one accord* agreeing therein, and particularly, & unanimouſly *ſo judging*; and therefore when *James* gives his judgement he uſeth the ſame word κρίνω (Verſ. 19. of this 15. Chap.) *This is my judgement*, which being voted and agreed upon by the *reſt* they are called κεκριμένα. Neither doth this argue any act of authority that the things here declared to be obſerved are *indifferent*, for ſome of them come under a *morall* conſideration, and all come under the caſe of *offence*.

Neither doth the language, they commend theſe to them in, ſound of *that Juriſdiction or government intended in the Propoſition*; for although they ſeeme to ſpeak as guided infallibly in their reſolution, [*it ſeemeth good to us and to the holy Ghoſt*] yet their expreſſions are carryed ſo, as avoid *Juriſdiction*. Thoſe words, [*To lay no other burthen*] if any, muſt import this *Juriſdiction*; but theſe words, as *Ludovicus de Dieu* hath well obſerved, are (as they may be) taken *paſſively*, therein agreeing with the *Syriack* tranſlation; *It ſeemeth good to us & the holy Ghoſt that no other burthen be laid on you*: That whereas theſe Teachers of the circumciſion had gone about by their doctrine *to bind the Law* of *Moſes* upon mens conſciences, and to put on them *a burthen too heavy for them to bear*, as *Peter* ſpeaks Verſ. 9. and had taught this to be the *command* of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and the *judgement* of the Church of *Jeruſalem*; They diſclaime this, and profeſſe they *would have no ſuch burthen* put upon them, and they gave theſe Teachers *no ſuch commandement*, that is, never delivered or uttered any ſuch Doctrine to be comanded. And if it be taken *actively*, yet the *declaring* it to be the command of Chriſt is the *impoſition* here intended, for *the ſame words* are uſed of *the Teachers*, who yet had not aſſumed by vertue of

an *Eccleſiaſticall authority* to impoſe theſe things, but by way of *Doctrine*, So Verſe the tenth, *Why tempt you God to put a yoak upon the neck of the Diſciples?* Verſ. 5. And it is well known that in the Scripture phraſe to *teach* and to declare, though by way of Doctrine, and to *preſſe* mens conſciences with things as the commands of God, is ſaid to be a *binding* and *impoſing a burthen* on them. So of the Phariſees (and theſe were of *the ſect of the Phariſees*, of whom, and to whom that was ſpoken, Verſe 5.) it is ſaid, *Matth.* 23. 4. *that the Phariſees bind heavy burthens & grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens ſhoulders*; which is ſpoken but of a Doctrinall declaring and preſſing mens conſciences with the rigour of the Law; and this is ſo well known to be the Language of the Jewes, that it need not be inſiſted on.

Neither doth it follow that *if they may lay theſe burthens by way of Doctrine, they may cenſure for the neglect of them*, for every Miniſter in his Sermon impoſeth thoſe burthens, whilſt they urge & declare theſe duties to men, and yet have not power Eccleſiaſtically to *cenſure* them. For though, it being a command of Chriſt, they could not but hold it forth as ſuch and ſo urge it; yet not by way of Juriſdiction, but with theſe *ſoft* words, [*which if you obſerve you doe well.*]

Laſtly, although theſe falſe Teachers *had ſubverted their faith*, and, againſt their own light, had vouched their Doctrine to be the *Doctrine* of the Apoſtles, which deſerved the higheſt cenſure being a ſin ſo ſcandalous, yet they proceeded *not to cenſure* them, by way of admonition or *excommunication* (which are acts of *government*) *but onely do declare* their ſinne and errour, and give their Judgement of it.

Reaſons

REASONS,

Againſt the two laſt *Aſſertions* of the *Aſſembly*, concerning the inſtance of the Church of *Jeruſalem*.

Aſſertion.

Whether theſe Congregations be fixed *or* not fixed, *in regard of* Officers *or* Members, *It is all one as to the truth of the Propoſition.*

Our Reply.

WHereas in the cloſe *of the proofe from the Church of Jeruſalem*, for many Congregations to be under one Presbyteriall Government, it is aſſerted:

Whether theſe Congregations be fixed or not fixed, it is all one as to the truth of the Propoſition.

This *Reaſon* is offered againſt it.

There is this *Difference*. *Every Congregation having Elders fixed to it, is a* CHURCH; for the relation of Elders & Church is mutuall, *Acts* 14.23. *They ordained Elders in every Church.* This relation of Elders to a Church is a *ſpeciall* diſtinct *relation* to *that* Congregation of which they are Elders, *ſo*, as they are not related to other Congregations. And *theſe* Congregations are *Eccleſiæ primæ*; *Churches formed* up though uncompleat, as being according to *our brehrens* opinion, members of a more *general* Presbyterial Church. But *if Congregations have no fixed Officers, they are not Churches* according to their Principles.

Now it makes a *great difference as to the truth of the Propoſition*, whether *many Churches* may be under the government *of one*, or whether *many Congregations* (which to them are no Churches) may be under the government *of one*? Whatſoever *our Bretbren* ſhew of divers Congregations to be under the government of a Church Presbyteriall, yet they no where ſhew any *one patterne* or example in Scripture wherein *many Churches were under the power of one*, nay, nor where *any one Church* was under the power of *another*.

Aſſertion.

That there appeares no materiall difference *betwixt the ſeverall Congregations in Jeruſalem, and the many Congregations* now *in the ordinary condition of the Church, as to the point of fixedneſſe, in regard of Officers and Members.*

Our Reply.

AND laſtly, *if there were many Congregations in Jeruſalem, having their Officers fixed to them*, and not in common, then during the time before the diſperſion, *the Apoſtles muſt be thoſe Officers*, that were thus fixedly diſpoſed

of to those severall Congregations, *some* over one, *others* over another, as *ordinary Elders* Now are. Now suppose this number of Beleevers to have been as many thousands as is argued, as 10. or 12000. soules, and these to be divided into as *many Congregations* as might be divided to *twelve* Apostles, *severally* to watch over; Or suppose the severall Congregations made up of 2000. (which is an alotment small enough to be set apart for the paines of two Apostles.)

Hereupon THIS *great incongruity* doth follow: that *Apostles are brought to the state and condition and work of Parish Ministers*: To *whom*, yet it was committed, and inseparably annexed to their Office, yea, and *constituted* it, as Apostles *to have the care of all Churches*; and if when the Churches were multiplyed and dispersed into severall Countries, they were to have the care of them, then much more when they were in one City. Some of the writers against *Episcopacy*, (when those that write for it, alledge the instance of *James* abiding at *Jerusalem*, as the *Bishop* of that Church) have judged it a debasing of the Apostolical power *to limit it to one Dioceſan* Church: but this position doth debase *all* the Apostles *at once* much more, it makes them *no Bishops* to many Churches, but *ordinary* Elders; in that one or two of them (perhaps) are over one single Church: yea, & which is yet more incredible, if *these Churches* & their government were *like* to those under the Presbytery, and *no materiall difference* between them and ours, these *Apostles were in their Parishes not onely subordinate in their government to the common Presbytery of all the Apostles, but limited to lesser Acts of Government*: For so the lesser, Elderships in the Churches under the Presbyteriall government are; confined onely to examine, & admonish, and prepare for the greater Presbytery, and therein *not enabled to ordaine Elders* over the Congregation, *or excommunicate* a member: *Peter* and *John* joyned together *were* by this principle *not enabled* to it. And yet, if we doe not suppose such a *limited* government in those severall Congregations, here can be *no patterne* for the Presbyterian government *as it is practised*. Or if otherwise, we should suppose them *fixed Officers* for *teaching* onely, to one of those Congregations, and to have *no government* at all over it, but to bring all to the *common Presbytery of Apostles*, that is a *greater incongruity* then the former: for this casts them *below* the condition of *our Parish Elders*, for unto them, the greater Presbytery doth allow some measure and part of the Government, but *such a supposition* would allow *Apostles, none*, in their severall Congregations.

Other

Other *REASONS* againſt the maine Propoſition,

The Scriptures holds forth, That many Congregations may be under one PRESBYTERIALL GOVERNMENT.

BY particular Congregations either firſt an Aſſembly of Chriſtians meeting for worſhip onely, as to hear, pray.&c. or ſecondly, an Aſſembly ſo niſhed with Officers as fit for Diſcipline having a Presbytery, is meant; in latter ſenſe, which is *that* the proofs are brought to confirme, and *that* t is practiſed where this government is ſet up, the *propoſition* is *equivalent* ſuch an aſſertion as this; *Many Presbyteries may be under Presbyteriall go-rnment*, as thus, Parochiall Presbyteries may be under one Claſſicall, many aſſicall, under one Provinciall,&c. which is the ſame as to affirme that *one esbytery may be over another*. As the Biſhops affirm, That one Presbyter may over another. This is evident, if you aſſert a Presbyteriall government may over a *Congregation* that is compoſed *of a Presbytery & people*: for it cannot ſaid to be over a Congregation, if it be over the *people onely*, that is not r *their Presbytery* alſo, For then the Presbytery will be Independent, and people under two Presbyteries *coordinate* and not *ſubordinate*, which ſtands with common reaſon.

This then being *the Aſſertion*, it is thus ARGUED AGAINST. *A Presbytery r a Presbytery*, or *power over power* neceſſarily imployeth *two* ſorts of Preſteries, or Eccleſiaſticall Juriſdictions, *ſpecially* diſtinct or at leaſt more then merically. *A greater or leſſer* vary not the kind in a Phyſicall or Theoloall conſideration, but in a *Politicall* it doth: He that hath a *greater power* n I have, that is a *power over my power*, a power to order, direct or corthe power I have, this mans power and mine differ as *two ſorts* or kinds power. And although this ſuperior Presbytery be made up of Presbyters as Commiſſioners from the congregationall or parochiall Presbyteries, this hinders not at all but that they may be thus diſtinct: For ſome Cies and townes corporate, their Officers are ſent up, and ſit as Members of rliament, yet this *Honourable Houſe* hath a power diſtinct, and ſuperiour that which is in *London* or *Yorke*: though the ſuperior Presbytery be made of Presbyters from ſeverall Congregations, yet it is made up of *Presbyries*, it hath the perſons materially conſidered, but not that power formalconſidered: for as while the Parliament ſits and certain Burgeſſes from rrough townes ſit as Members in it, theſe Townes notwithſtanding ſtill aine all the power thoſe Corporations were ever inveſted with, ſo partular Congregations whilſt ſome of their Elders ſit in the Claſſicall Presbyry, have Elderſhips or a Presbytery ſtill. Now that it is very probable

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the *Scriptures hold not forth* TWO SORTS OF PRESBYTERIES THUS SPECIFICALLY DISTINCT, may be thus argued.

I. First, where the Scripture holds forth distinct sorts in any kind, there will be found either distinct and proper names and titles, or at least some adjunct or difference added to that which is common or generall; In the Apostles times there were Presbyters over Presbyters, Apostles were superior to Prophets, and Prophets a distinct order from Teachers; Therefore in 1 *Cor.* 12. *God hath set some in the Church: First Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, then gifts of Healing &c.* They have not only particular names and titles, but speciall notes of distinction added, πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας, as in *Gen.* 1. where no distinction of names is given, The Sun, the Moon, and Stars of Heaven, are all called Lights, yet there are termes of difference added, they are called first, *great Lights*, and then the *greater to rule the day*, and the *lesser to rule the night*.

Throughout the New Testament we find this word πρεσβυτεριὸν, but in *three* places, whereof there is but one that holdeth out the Government in hand, and in that place you have the *naked word only* without the addition of any such expression, *greater*, *lesser*, *superiour*, *inferior*, or any kind of *adjunct*, that can possibly put a thought in us, of *more Presbyteries* then one. Notwithstanding so usefull are peculiar distinct names where there are distinct sorts or kinds of admiration, as it is not omitted by any Church in their Ordinances for Government; in *Scotland* the lowest is termed a *Consistory*, the next a *Classis* or Presbytery, the third *a Provinciall Synod*, the fourth a *Generall Assembly*. The *French* in their termes, *Consistories*, and *Colloquells* and *Synods*: so in the *Episcopall Republique* there was the like variety.

II. Secondly, As the Scriptures hold forth nothing in any title or name to distinguish, no more can we thence discover any *sorts* of Government *different in nature*; for triall of this, let it be supposed there is a *Parochiall or Consistorian* Presbytery for one sort, there is another sort we call *Classicall*, what Scripture gives light by any kind of reasoning to warrant the setting up one of those above, or over the other? Doe you read anywhere *God hath set in his Church, first Presbyteries, secondarily, Classes, then Consistories?* Or is there any thing in the word directing a different composition or constitution in these?

First, For the *materiale*, the Persons that these Presbyteries are made up of, are the same; The Consistory hath gifted men set a part to the Office of the Ministry; Those that are in a Classicall Presbytery are no otherwise qualified, nor indeed doth the Scripture require any thing but a *Presbyteration* to qualifie men for any sort, *if there* were *sorts* of *Presbytery*.

That, there is a greater number of Presbyters in the one then in the

other

other this alters not the ſtate in reſpect of the *matter*; for if the *number* be competent, that is, ſo many as *two or three may agree*, *Mat.* 18. it ſufficeth. The Honourable *Houſe of Commons*, is to all Parliamentary purpoſes as much a *Houſe*, when but *two* or *three above forty*, as when *foure hundred*. Nor doth this alwayes fall out that all Claſſicall Presbyteries have a greater number then ſome Parochiall. Scriptures have determined neither how few will conſtitute a Claſſicall Presbytery, nor how many may be in a Parochial: Practice many times makes them equall.

Secondly, Now for the *Formale*, the uniting of this matter into a *Conſeſſus* or *Cœtus*. Presbyters become united into a Presbytery in the Claſſicall by having Paſtorall charges in ſuch a diviſion, whoſoever commeth ſo to be diſpoſed of, he is no ſooner *Paſtor to ſuch a Pariſh*, but he is *eo nomine*, *Member of ſuch a Claſſis*. The Presbyters of a Prochiall Presbytery are as neerly united and more: They are united in the choice and call of the ſame Congregation they govern, & united in the whole work of the Miniſtery over the ſame people; ſo that they are not only *fellow Governours*, but *fellow Labourers* in the ſame Vineyeard. *There is therefore no juſt ground for ſuch a diſtinction of difference between Presbytery and Presbytery in reſpect either of the* MATTER *or the* FORM.

III. Thirdly, Nor thirdly, do we find any thing in the *Scriptures* making them, as from *different imployments*, or *functions, to differ*; firſt, we pretend and ſo it is in the propoſition, the one is *ſuperiour*, the other *inferiour*; But how can you ſay the Scriptures have made this difference, when there is not a word ſpoken this way in any place? *Presbyterian Writers* themſelves in ſome expreſſions ſeeme to take away utterly ſuch difference as this; in one place you ſhall read the Claſſis can doe nothing, *renitente Eccleſia*, but it is *null* and invalid; Thus *the Aſſertion for Diſcipline*, and avouches *Zepperus*, *Zanchy*, and others as of this opinion. *The Congregation*, though but *minima Eccleſiola*, yet may *reforme*, that is, *ſuſpend*, *excommunicate*, &c. *Renitentibus correſpondentiis*. So *Voetius* in his *Theſes*, *& deſperata cauſa Papatus*, *lib.* 2. *Sect. c.* 12. Surely according to what theſe Reverend Divines have expreſſed, it is hard to be ſaid, which of theſe Presbyteries hath the greater or ſuperiour power.

Secondly, the *imployment* or work of a Presbytery is to *ordaine*, *excommunicate*, ſuſpend, admit Members, appoint times for worſhip and the like. The Claſſical Presbytery reſerve ordination, & excommunication to themſelves, but the other are left to *Parochial Presbytery*: Thus *ſome* Presbyterians *divide* the work, *Others* poſſibly otherwiſe. But how can we affirme *any ſuch deſignment* from the Scriptures, if you have not *two ſorts*, either in *name* or *nature* to be found there? and *none* of theſe *Acts* or *Adminiſtrations* but may be done by that *one*, the Scripture mentioneth, which doubtleſſe they may, ſeeing *Ordination* ſeemeth

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to be ſpecifyed in the Text; if the greater, then doubtleſſe the leſſer. Th
Paſtor in one place is ſaid to *exhort*, in another to *comfort*, in another t
viſit the ſicke, this will not warrant *diſtinct ſorts* of Paſtors, for there be
ing but *one ſort* ſpoken of in Scriptures, we muſt interpret all theſe *ſeuer*
Adminiſtrations to belong to that one.

It was not found an eaſie work in this *Aſſembly* to finde *two ſorts* o
Elders, *teaching*, and *ruling*. Notwithſtanding all the Scripture hath ſa
of theſe, and in ſome places, ſo plaine, as if of purpoſe to diſtinguiſ
them. If it be ſo hard a matter by Scripture light to hold forth two ſor
of *Preſbyteries*, it muſt needs be more difficult to find out two ſor
of *Preſbyteries*, eſpecially ſeeing (as it is generally granted, and this b
the *Presbyterians* themſelves) that for above fifty yeares after Chriſt, and
the Apoſtles times, there was but one kinde of *Presbytery*.

It hath been the wiſdome of States to keep and preſerve the bound
and limits of their Judicatures evident, and diſtinct, and as free fro
controverſie as may be. If Laws and Ordinances about matters of *meu*
and *tuum*, and ſuch inferiour claimes ſhould not be ſo evident, the auth
rity of theſe Courts will be in a readineſſe to relieve wrongs and injur
through ſuch miſtakings. But Controverſies and claſhings about the
high and publique intereſts are no other in the iſſue then the *dividing*
a Kingdome within it ſelf.

Is man wiſer in his Generation then *Jeſus Chriſt? He is our Law-giv*
the Government is laid upon his ſhoulders; he is the wonderfull Councellor,
Prince of Peace. And therefore ſurely though other matters of practi
and duty ſhould have obſcurity in the rule, Yet it is moſt probable, h
hath ordered *Authority* and *Juriſdiction* with the Officers and Offices f
the managing of it, *ſo evident*, as not to put us to ſearch in a dark cor
for *directions*. We cannot be ſaid to be cleer in our rule when we areth
inforced out of *one* word, and but *once* uſed, *to raiſe* ſo *many Thron*
or *Formes* of Government, eſpecially it being foreſeen by Chriſt th
ſuch is the nature of man as nothing occaſions more bitter contenti
then that luſting which is in us to have *Authority* and *Juriſdiction* o
others.

Sic ſubſcribitur:
Tho. Goodwin, *William Bridge,*
Philip Nye, *William Greenhill,*
Jer. Burroughes, *William Carter.*
Sidrach Sympſon.

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

THE ANSWER OF THE ASSEMBLY of DIVINES, UNTO The Reaſons of the ſeven diſſenting Brethren, againſt the Propoſition of divers Congregations being united under one Presbyteriall GOVERNMENT.

And firſt, to their firſt and maine Argument. Concerning which we obſerve: Firſt, That

THis firſt maine Argument is equally ſtrong againſt all Government by Synods, which the whole Chriſtian Church hath ever acknowledged unto this day.

Secondly, it is as ſtrong (though they intended it not) againſt Elders doing any act of Elders out of their own particular Congregation, what need ſoever there be of it: So that if any particular Congregation cannot preſerve it ſelfe, it muſt be left in corruption and to perdition, rather then any Act of the Elders of another Congregation may be exerciſed for their relief, by any Ec-

 cleſiaſticall

clesiasticall or Presbyteriall power: As suppose a Minister should administer the Sacrament in another Congregation upon any exigent, all the incongruities and absurdities of this Argument fall upon him. 1. It may be alledged against him, Then he must stand in relation to them as an Elder of that flock; Church and Elder are *Relata*, as well as Church and Elders, and then he must watch over their Soules, &c. Then his whole work must be ἐν ὑμῖν, then may he rule them, his Preaching and ruling power must be commensurable; then may they challenge to elect him, then may the Deacons of his Parish come and collect Almes among them, &c. And so of all the rest of the Incongruities, and disproportions. This Argument therefore carrying with it so much mischief to the whole Church, must needs be false either in the *major*, or *minor*, or both, which to discover, we premise these few *præcognita*.

First, The whole Church of Christ is but one, made up of the Collection and aggregation of all who are called out of the world by the Preaching of the Word, to professe the Faith of Christ, unto the unity thereof: From which union there ariseth unto every one such a relation unto, and dependance upon the Catholike Church, as parts have to the whole, and are to do all Christian duties, as parts conjoyned unto the whole, and Members of the same Common-wealth and Corporation, *Eph. chap.* 4. *ver.* 3, to 14.

Secondly, All the Ministers and Officers of the Church are given to the whole Church for the gathering and building of it, 1 *Cor. chap.* 12. *ver.* 28. *Eph. chap.* 4. *ver.* 11, 12. And they are all to teach and rule, and perform all other ministrations with reference to it, and the best advantage of it.

Thirdly, When this whole number of called men, and their Officers were no more then might meet together in one place, they taught and ruled, and did all other ministeriall and Christian works in one undivided body respectively.

Fourthly, Their number increasing, so that they could not with edification meet all together according to the will of Christ, they divided into severall companies for their better ordering and increase, and such severall Companies joyned together in one externall fellowship and communion of the same publique Profession, and rule of Faith, worship of God, and Ecclesiasticall Discipline, and practice of love, and the duties of it, are in the Scripture called Churches, and to some one of these should every believer joyn himself.

Fifthly, And being thus joyned, the Officers and Membe s should not act or work, as if they were independent Corporations, but only as parts of *Christs body*, and are all to regard the common good of the whole, and all things in these smaller bodies are to be mannaged for

for the greateſt advantage of the whole, *Epheſians Chap. 4. ver. 1. &c.*

Sixthly, As it is the will of Chriſt, that particular Chriſtian men and families ſhould be aſſociated into ſome particular Aſſembly, for their own and others edification, ſo (as much as may be) ſhould ſuch particular Aſſemblies aſſociate with other Aſſemblies, for the common and mutuall good of them all, ſometimes they ſtanding in need of others, or others of them; ſometimes themſelves ſingly are inſufficient to their own buſineſſe; ſometimes diviſions grow between the people and their Elders; ſometimes the people rent from their Elders; ſometimes the Elders miſcarry in their adminiſtrations to the people; ſometimes a whole Church groweth corrupt in doctrine or converſation; ſometimes it is not commodious and expedient to uſe their power without aſſiſtance and counſell: in all which caſes they ſtand in need of the help of others, and when other Congregations are in the like condition, they ſtand in the like need of them. Some things alſo being of common concernment to them all, as when ſometimes error, Hereſie, Schiſm, overrun many of theſe Congregations; ſometimes diviſions grow betwixt Church and Church; ſometimes Miniſters are to be tranſlated from one Congregation to another, and many the like things fall out, which are of common concernment, and cannot be done by any of them alone: And in all ſuch caſes, and for all ſuch ends they are tyed to aſſociate, as much as particular men are tied to aſſociate with a Congregation if it may be obtained, and no excuſe can be pleaded for a Congregation and their Officers, which may not be pleaded for a particular perſon, the unity of the body of Chriſt being as ſtrong for the one as for the other, and the neceſſity and benefits of the one as of the other.

Seventhly, In ſuch Aſſociations, as the mutuall conſent of particular men and families orderly regulated joyning in one Congregation gives them power and authority one over another according to the rule of Chriſt, without hurting or deſtroying, but rather helping and ſtrengthning of the Liberty of their ſeverall perſons and families: So in this Aſſociation of Congregations their mutuall conſent orderly regulated gives them a ſufficient call for the Elders to exereiſe their power of Elders (which is no where any other then miniſteriall) and the people their intereſt in ſuch things as are above mentioned, without impairing or hurting the liberty and privileges of the Congregations, but rather preſerving and ſtrengthning of them; this aſſociation of Congregations, as that alſo of Families being ſuch a joyning as proceeds *Ex charitate, ex debito mutuæ ſocietatis colendæ*, as is between friends and equals, *Non ex debito inferioris conditionis ad præſtandum obſequium*, as between Maſters and Servants. This is moſt cleer in the continuall intercouſe held in the Churches of the New Teſtament betwixt

severall Churches or Congregations, one with another, even while they enjoyed the personall presence, direction and authority of the Apostles, 2 *Corinthians Chapter* 8. *Verse* 14. 19. with *Romans Chapter* 15. *Verse* 26. *Colossians Chapter* 4. *Verse* 16. *Acts Chapter* 11. *Verse* 29, 30. *Galatians Chap.* 6. *Ver.* 1, 2, 5, 9. with *Galatians Chapter* 1. *Verse* 2. *Acts Chapter* 13. *Verse* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Acts Chapter* 15. *Verse* 1, 3, 4. Sometimes by Letters written to many Churches as one body, sometimes by Commissioners, sometimes by Synods, sometimes in a particular matter concerning one Church, sometimes in matter of common concernment to many Churches: And it is impossible the common good of the whole Church should be preserved without these Associations: It being cleerly the will of Christ, that the Communion of Saints not only internall but also externall among them all should be maintained and increased; All being tyed to *strive together in one spirit, to help one another, to strengthen the weake, to admonish the unruly, to withdraw from them that walke inordinately.* The institution of Christ making his Church one, and apponting all these as means proportionable to attaine that end, and no where limitting them to be as meanes to particular and individuall men only; but left them to be applyed according to the present condition of times, places, persons, of one, or more, or many, whether men or Churches: The very light of nature requiring, that all due and lawfull means should be used for the attaining of some necessary end, warrants us to conclude, that the means appointed or commanded for particular Christians, should be as appliable to whole Companies of them, unlesse Gods word hath some where forbidden it. If it be demanded whether it be not left free to Congregations and their Officers, whether they will joyn in such Association or not; because their mutuall consent is that which is pleaded as the next foundation of it? We answer, It is here as it is in the case of joyning with a particular Congregation: All are injoyned to it by Christ to be Members of some Congregation; but when they joyn to this Congregation rather then to that, the mutuall consent between them, and the Congregation with whom they joyn, is that wch immediately gives them that special relation to one another: So is it here, what further rules are about the regular setling of Congregations or such Associations as these are, what is the Magistrates power or duty in setling the bounds of Congregations or such Presbyteries, or what he hath to do with such as refuse either to associate with particular Congregations, or Classicall Presbyteries, or what the duty of the Churches is about it, belongs not to this present question, it is sufficient here to shew, that such as are willing thus to associate may see a warrant for it.

Eighthly, such proofes and evidences must be admitted by our *Brethren*

thren in this point, as are acknowledged and allowed by them in other parts of Church government, wherein they agree with us, which are not alwayes immediately out of Scripture ſufficiently cleare to convince pertinacious adverſaries; And yet the Scripture-grounds compared with light of nature are ſufficient to ſatisfie pious and moderate men.

Theſe things premiſed, we proceed to this their main Argument, *viz. If many particular Congregations, having all their Officers fixed, &c.*

Where firſt in generall we note, that they have framed this Argument only againſt the joyning of thoſe many Congregations into one Preſbyteriall government, who have all their Officers fixt, which is not our Propoſition, nor was our inſtance brought to prove it: We determined not whether all Congregations can have all Officers fixed, not whether they muſt have them if they could, whether the ſeverall Congregations ſo united muſt have each their own particular Presbytery, or whether they muſt all *coaleſcere in unum tantum Presbyterium*; Nor do we find it certain, whether in *Jeruſalem* the officers were fixed or not fixed.

We doubt not to affirme that there may be divers Congregations joyned in one Presbytery only, and the Officers to teach and govern in Common, when it ſhall be found moſt for their edification, and ſo it is in ſome reformed Churches at this day: and the truth thereof was alſo acknowledged by one of theſe *diſſenting Brethren*, who refuſed to enter his diſſent againſt the Propoſition if taken in this ſenſe: And we doubt not alſo to affirm, that where there is this joyning of many Congregations, there may be diſtinct Presbyteries in the ſeverall Congregations, who may have either ſome or all Officers fixt, and they may do what belongs to that Congregation, only ſo far as they are able, and their joyning into a Common Presbytery is for their helping & ſtrengthning.

So that our Propoſition may ſtand true, though their whole Argument were granted, and the whole ſtrength of it, is by their new framing of it appliable only againſt the Appendix in the inſtance of *Jeruſalem, viz. That it is all one as to the truth of the propoſition, &c.*

And unleſſe the fixing of Officers do wholly alter the State of the queſtion, their argument muſt fall to the ground: for inſtance, ſuppoſe in *Jeruſalem* there were ten Congregations and twenty Officers feeding and ruling them in common, no one of them fixed to any one Congregation. This kind of Presbytery would paſſe for a lawfull government, and none of theſe incongruities or abſurdities are charged upon it by this Argument; but if they ſhould find by experience that it would be more for the edification of the Congregations to have two of the Officers fixed to each Congregation to teach and govern them in ſuch things which concern themſelves, and yet all of them agree in a Common Colledge with mutuall adviſe and conſent

to transact all things which should be of dificultie or common concernment: Such a Presbytery should make them liable to all these Incongruities and absurdities by this their Argument. Yet notwithstanding we shall examine it, as themselves have framed it, viz. *If many Congregations having all Elders already fixed respectively unto them may be under a Presbyteriall government; then all those Elders must sustain a speciall relation of Elders to all the people of those Congregations as one Church, and to every one as a member thereof. But this carries with it great and manifold incongruities and inconsistences with rules of Scripture, and principles of reformed Churches themselves; therefore it may not be.*

We answer, first to the consequence of the *major* by denying it, That in such a government, the Elders do the work of Elders, is granted, and that in that work, and because of the work there done, they bear a speciall relation of Presbytery to the Churches, is as readily granted: But that therefore they must be judged singly Elders of these Churches, tyed to do all the Offices of Elders to them as to the Congregations where they ate fixed, Or that all the Congregations who joyne in such an Association must necessarily be one Church, one particular. First Church (as it is called) is utterly false; when many Elders of severall Congregations meet in a Synod and do such Acts as *our Brethren* grant they may do in relation to many Congregations; We suppose they will not deny that they do these Acts of Elders as Elders: yet they are not thereby every one argued to be Elders of every one of these Congregations, or these Congregations argued to be one Church. Or when a Minister administers the Sacrament to another Congregation, or to the people of another Congregation, he doth it as an Elder, and as having a speciall relation to that people at that time, and in that work, he being called to it; yet it followes not that he is, or therefore must be an Elder of that Church, bound to performe all Offices of an Elder publikely and privately to every one of them.

And if it be excepted against this, *that such an occasionall Act doth not indeed prove it, but to do it statedly or ordinarily will prove it.* We answer, that which is lawfull for him to do once or twice, is not made unlawfull to do oftentimes when the same call and occasion requires it; he may not once do that which is unlawfull, he may not once do that Act of an Elder out of his own place which should needlessely disable him from his work in his own place, but supposing him faithfull in that, he may and ought to put forth any act of an Elder for the good of other Churches, yea for all the Churches in the world (if he be able and thereunto called) as well as to pray and write books for the benefit of all. If he be able without prejudice to his own work at home, he may keep a weekly Lecture in another Congregation for the benefit thereof:

Or in adminiſtration of Sacraments, ſuppoſe a Miniſter, who hath but a ſmall Congregation, it may be a hundred ſouls, ſhould live by another Miniſter who had a Congregation of two or three thouſand ſouls, he may ordinarily aſſiſt that other Miniſter in the adminiſtration of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper when it may be done without prejudice to his own little flock. If any ſhould ſay, *it is not lawfull for a Miniſter to adminiſter the Sacrament in another Congregation, becauſe it is a Church Act, but yet may receive the people of another Congregation to receive the Sacrament with his Church*, as the practice of ſome is.

We anſwer, if by a Church Act be meant, that they who receive together muſt be one Church, that is falſe, and we think *our Brethren* will not own it; for if ſo, none may receive the Sacrament in any Church, but thoſe that are members of that Church. And if it be granted, that they ſtill are members of another Church; Then it is granted that an Elder may do an Act of an Elder amongſt thoſe to whom he is not a fixed Officer; and ſurely he may as well do it when he goes to them, as when they come to him for it: A man doth as truly lend money to his neighbour, who comes to fetch it at his houſe, as when he carries it to his neighbours houſe, though his courteſie is more in the latter. If it ſhould be yet further ſaid, that though all this ſhould be granted, that *Elders may preach and adminiſter Sacraments to others, yet it will not follow that they may exerciſe Acts of diſcipline towards others, though they ſhould call them thereunto in ſuch an Aſſociation.* We anſwer firſt, where is that limitation in the Scripture for the one and not for the other? Neither can *our Brethren* object it, who acknowledge the Elders power of teaching, ruling, and adminiſtration of Sacraments to be commenſurable. And we further ſay, that of all the Acts of an Elder (wherein he is to apply the will of God to others) none are ſo ſafe for him to performe as thoſe belonging to diſcipline, both becauſe they are to be performed *in Collegio*, with the advice and aſſiſtance of others, and are all to be performed *ſecundum allegata & probata* only. We ſay therefore cleerely, that when many Congregations do mutually agree, that the Elders of their ſeverall Congregations ſhould joyn by mutuall adviſe, counſell, and authoritie of Elders to manage all matters of common concernment, difficultie, &c. among themſelves: All theſe thus joyned in a body or an Elderſhip to thoſe Congregations, and each one doth the Acts of Elders in the Presbytery to thoſe Congregations in all thoſe things for which they are thus aſſociated; yet every one of them ſeverally, and particularly, is not to be looked upon as an Elder of every one of thoſe Congregations, and bound to do the whole work of an Elder to every one of them. And thus it is likewiſe in human affaires, in the Jewiſh Common-wealth, the heads of the ſeverall Tribes, when all

joyned

joyned together, were as a Parliament to all *Israel*, and might in that associated body do many things which could not be required of particular Elders, or heads of the Tribes: So is it with us, the Knights and Burgesses assembled in Parliament may in that Body do many things, in relation to the whole Kingdome, which none of them may do severally and singly: So may Colonels associated in a Councell of War, so may particular heads of Colledges joyn'd in the Consistory, so may the Aldermen of severall Wards, when joyned in the Court of Aldermen. And whereas they reply to this, page 8. that *in all these Instances, these have their distinct names, Laws, and work set out by their severall states: For example, The Scripture held out in that of the Tribes, that there were generall heads of the Tribes who were called Elders of the people, the others were called Elders of such and such Cities, of such and such Families, and so forth, and had their severall work set out by Law; the generall heads had reserved cases of blasphemy, &c. the like*, they say, *is in the other instances found among our selves, Colonels, Masters of Colledges, Aldermen of Cities, Burgesses of Towns, and Parliament, have both their Titles, and works set down respectively, what they may do in their lesser Sphear, and what they may do in their greater Associations. But for ours the Scripture holds forth no such thing, they are called Elders similarly and univocally, and we shall reade but simply and singly, Elders and Churches, as relatives, without any such note of distinction.*

We Answer, (not to dispute how hard it would be for *our Brethren* to prove clearly that distinction of the severall names and work of these Elders in *Israel*, *&c.*) we inquire not after names, but things: And as for the thing in question, we have already cleered, that the Scripture holds out, that as the Church is one, and all the Elders given for the good of that one Church; so their Officers (when orderly called for) should be exercised in any part of it for the good thereof: and that a mutuall consent and agreement, is a sufficient warrant and call for the exercise of this power, whether in one Congregation only, as suppose in *Cenchrea*, or in many, as suppose in *Jerusalem*, or yet more, as suppose when *Antioch* and *Jerusalem* joyned, *Act. Chap.* 15. that in any of these, or all of these, they may, and ought, upon such a call, exercise any of their gifts and offices, as the Church, or any part thereof shall stand *in* need: As in a County or Kingdom, when the State sets many Commissioners for preserving the Peace of that County or Kingdom in all their meetings, whether in Parishes, in relation to the Parish only; or in Hundreds, in relation to the Hundred only; or in their Quarter or Generall Sessions: While in all these meetings, they regularly seek to preserve the Common Peace, they are warranted to all by their Commission: so is it here.

As

As for the alluſion of *Burgeſſes in ſeverall Corporations, and their arrogating greater power, or power of larger extent then the Laws allow, under pretence of their names of Burgeſſes and Corporations, becauſe in ſome other State or Kingdom, there were Burgeſſes who had ſuch power as thoſe would claim*: which alluſion they largely proſecute.

We Anſwer, It would fully confute us, if we challenged any other power, or extent of power then *Chriſt* hath given to all his Miniſters to exerciſe in any part of his *Church* upon a call.

We ſay again, That this power of *Miniſters* is no where any other then Miniſteriall, and that is not to be exerciſed any where at their own wills, but according to his direction, and the call of his *Church*, and then they may do it.

But we alſo anſwer ſecondly, That it would ſuit the Queſtion in hand far better, to ſuppoſe that all and every the Pariſhes in *London*, yea, in all *England*, were every one of them ſuch an abſolute Corporation, and the ſeverall Inhabitants ſuch Burgeſſes, that they had not only all power in themſelves to do their own buſineſſe, without any others claiming any Authority over them, how bad ſoever they ſhould grow; but that alſo it ſhould be pretended to be againſt their fundamentall Liberties to aſſociate with any others for matters of difficulty, miſcarriages, or common concernment to do any thing for ſuppreſſing any enormities among themſelves or others, otherwiſe then by taking or giving counſell and advice, which if they refuſe to follow, they may deny familiarity to them, but uſe no other Authority to reclaim them. Such a Compariſon would truly ſet forth the ſtate of the Controverſie; by which we might conjecture what rents, diviſions, miſchiefs, confuſions, all Cities, Townes, and Pariſhes would quickly be filled and overrun withall.

Thus *Your Honours* ſee with what cleer evidence, and upon what juſt grounds and reaſon we deny the conſequence of their *major Propoſition*, which is the only foundation upon which all the reſt is built.

We now proceed to examine the *proofes of their Major*; *Firſt*, ſay they, *they muſt have relation of Elders to all and every one of the members: For Church and Elders are Relatives.*

We Anſwer firſt, If by *Church* there, be meant a particular Church, we deny the truth of that *Propoſition*, *Relata* do *ſe mutuo ponere & tollere*. And a Miniſter of the Goſpel, is ſo made a Miniſter to the Catholike Church of *Chriſt*, that he doth not ceaſe to be an Elder alwayes when his relation to a particular Church doth ceaſe.

Secondly, When they ſtand in relation to a particular Church; yet if the meaning be, that they are Relatives, ſo that every Act of an Elder muſt Argue him to ſtand in relation to an Elder in all duties of an El-

der to that Church or people to whō he performs one Act; We have already ſhewed the falſity of it. An Elder in his work is not limitted by the Law of God to one Congregation, as the office of a Parent or Husband, are limited by the law of nature to their own children or wife, to whom they muſt perform the duties of theſe relations wholy & only: or as a Conſtable is limited by our Laws to one Pariſh. But rather, as in the former Compariſon of Commiſſioners for the peace, who though they ordinarily exerciſe their Authority in ſome one certain Diviſion, where their reſidence is, yet occaſionally extend it to all parts of the County, as a call requires them: So we ſay the Elders receive their power and Commiſſion for the whole *Church* of *Chriſt*, and may exerciſe it where. ever they have a call, and no where without a call; and the mutuall aſſent and agreement of the perſons among whom, and to whom they ſhould exerciſe it, is the *proximum fundamentum hujus exercitii*. And whereas they further ſay; *That the Argument of the Presbyterial Government, is taken by the Presbyterial Divines from this, that many Congregations in Scripture are made one Church, and the Elders thereof Elders of that Church.*

We Anſwer, when a multitude of believers, (though many thouſands) agreed together in one presbyterial Government, who had but one only Presbytery, and who probably did all in common, for feeding and governing; they were uſually called by the name of *one Church*, and the Elders were the Elders of that *Church*: and ſo it may be ſtill in the like condition. They found it beſt, in thoſe times of perſecution, and publike unſetledneſs, to have one *common Treaſury* for all their poor, and one *common Conſiſtory* for all matters of cenſure: But doubtleſs had the number of believers grown to ſuch a multitude, as that it would have bred confuſion to have all their *Eccleſiaſtical Affairs* managed in one Court, and took them off from the reſt of their work; the light of nature teacheth us to conclude, that they would have had more *Conſiſtories* then one for Government, as well as upon the former increaſe of believers, they grew to have more meeting places then one for Word and Sacraments, and yet would have held ſuch a correſpondency as matters of difficulty and Common concernment ſhould have been managed by Common conſent. But whether all thoſe Congregations growing ſo numerous, and thoſe Presbyteries thus divided ſhould have been called *one Church* ſtill; we know not, nor is it of any moment. We ſay again, VVe are not inquiring for names and things.

Secondly, their other proof is *from the practice of the Elders, who do thus joyn in a Presbyterial Government; becauſe when Congregations in Shires are divided into ſeveral Presbyteries, the Elders (though Neighbors) of a bordering Presbyterie, intermeddle not with the Congregations under another Presbyterie.*

VVe

We Anſwer, It is true, they do take themſelves bound in a ſpeciall relation to thoſe Congregations who are aſſociated in that Presbyterie, in thoſe things for which they are Aſſociated, and their mutuall conſent and agreement gives them that relation and calling to thoſe things: And the caſe is here as it is in particular Congregations, all Beleevers are tied to joyn to ſome Congregation or other, to whom they bear a ſpeciall relation, beſides that which they owe to the whole univerſall Church, yet peradventure their habitation is neerer to ſome who are of another Congregation, then to ſome of their own.

And we adde yet further, that theſe ſeverall *Claſſicall Presbyteries* may have the like Aſſociation and correſpondencies amongſt themſelves as matters of difficulty and common concernment may occaſion and require.

Their *Major*, and the proofes of it being thus found inſufficient, We need not inſiſt longer upon the pretended incongruities, and diſproportions, which they have ſo largely proſecuted in their *minor*, and the proofes of it: yet ſo far as there is any thing in them of any ſeeming weight, we ſhall take them into conſideration, wherein we ſhall diſcover ſome things to be falſe in themſelves, other things not to be prejudiciall to our Aſſertion. As firſt, *For extending the power of ordinary ruling, beyond the power of ordinary Preaching.*

We Anſwer, This extends not his ordinary power of the one, beyond the ordinary power of the other, but only the ordinary exerciſe of the one, beyond the ordinary exerciſe of the other, having herein a call to the one, and not to the other; which is no incongruity or abſurdity (as we have before ſhewed;) And as for their alledged Scriptures, *Acts* 20. 28. 2 *Pet.* 5. *Coloſſ.* 1. 17. *Heb.* 13. 17. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12. 1 *Tim.* 3. 17. None of them prove the contrary, they only ſhew that all theſe things belong to their Office, and that this is the ordinary and uſuall practiſe and work of Elders where their work lies, but none of them prove it unlawfull for an Elder upon a call to do one of theſe, where they have not occaſion, and a call to do the reſt.

And as for the compariſon, *that this was made the uſuall Argument againſt Biſhops, that people were forced to obey him, who preached not to them, nor watched over their ſouls, &c. This Argument,* ſay they, *holds as well againſt the Presbyteriall way.*

We anſwer, That the exceptions againſt Epiſcopall way, were, that they challenged theſe things as belonging to them, as men of a higher order, Challenge that to one which belongs to a Colledge, Spoiled both Paſtors and people of their power and liberties, Aſſociated not Congregations with them, but Subdued them unto them; Were not mutually ſubject to the Presbyterie, whom they would have ſubject to him; Things were not carried in a way of confederation as *inter pares*;

They and their power being wholly extrinſicall to them, buſineſſe not being of mutuall concernment. Theſe and the like were the exceptions againſt the Epiſcopall way: but not that it was unlawfull for him being a Presbyter to exerciſe an Act of Government, upon aſſociation toward them to whom he ordinarily preached not: And this is apparent, becauſe even the *Nonconformiſts* who pleaded thus againſt him, yet judged ordination received by impoſition of their hands to be valid *quoad ſubſtantiam actus*, becauſe they were Presbyters.

To the Reaſons, *firſt, becauſe the ruling power flowes from their power of preaching, and therefore muſt be extendable no further: as the power of a Father is extendable only to his Children.*

We anſwer, Firſt, it is falſe, that his ruling power flowes from his preaching power, ſome have the gifts & power of ruling who have not of preaching. Secondly, Were it granted, yet it follows not, that he muſt do the one where ever he doth the other; both are given him together, but neither to be exerciſed without a call, and ſometimes he may be called to exerciſe the one and not the other, as we have before ſhewed.

To the reaſon of their Reaſons, *Firſt, ſay they, if it flow not from his power of Preaching, it muſt flow from ſomething elſe: We Anſwer*, all his office and authority is conferred together by Chriſt his gift, as the Fountain, and the Churches call, as the meanes.

To their ſecond, *All the keyes are given together, &c.*

Anſwer, We grant it, (and this confutes their former *Reaſon*, that the power of ruling flowes from their power of Preaching:) And we grant alſo that the one is extendable as far as the other, even to the whole Church of *Chriſt*, but ever as he ſhall be called, and as the good of the Church requires, yet the exerciſe of the one is not neceſſary to be extended actually as far as the exerciſe of the other.

To their third, the inſtance of the Apoſtles, *that their power was extendable with their commiſſion to Preach, &c.*

Anſw. Very true, ſo was their power to adminiſter the Sacraments, yet *Paul* took not himſelf bound to exerciſe his power of baptizing in all places, where he took himſelf bound to Preach, but attended chiefely to that which might moſt benefit the Church. And *our Brethren* ſeeme to us not a little to weaken their own Argument, and ſtrengthen our Anſwer, in their alledging in the ſame place, *that though the Apoſtles (as Apoſtles) power of ruling was extendable with their Preaching*; Yet grant that *they might exerciſe the one, where they might not exerciſe the other.* For if an Apoſtle, as an Apoſtle, may exerciſe one Act of his Miniſtery, where he may not exerciſe another, then may a *Presbyter*, as a Presbyter exerciſe one Act of his Miniſtery, where he may not exerciſe another.

To their ſecond head of incongruities, *that it makes a diſproportion between the Workes or offices of Ruling and Preaching Officers compared between*

tween themſelves, becauſe a Paſtor, qua paſtor, *is limited in the higheſt work of Preaching to one Congregation, and not in his ruling.*

We Anſwer, The Paſtors are given to the whole Church, and are not limited in their higheſt Office of Preaching to one Congregation: his ordinary exerciſe of Preaching may poſſibly be limited to one Congregation, yet not neceſſarily, for he may keep an ordinary Lecture in another. Nor doth it (as their next head of incongruities imports) make him a Ruling Elder to ſome, and a Preaching Elder to others: Theſe two make him not two Officers, but are two branches of his one Office, either of which he is to exerciſe as a call requires; And it is no incongruity or abſurdity to ſay that he may have a Relation to one Congregation to do ſome Acts of his Office upon a call, and yet not tied to all.

To the next head concerning the extent of the Deacons Office, the ſum whereof is; That then the Deacons Office might be extended to more Congregations then one. We Anſwer, ſo it was in *Jeruſalem*, and ſo it may be ſtill, as the like condition of the Church may require: were the poor Saints to be maintained now as then, only by voluntary Contributions, divers Congregations might be aſſociated in this work alſo, for the common care of their poor: And with us (where God in mercy hath otherwiſe provided for the poor) the Law hath ordered, that if one Pariſh be not able to maintain their own poor, the Neighbour Pariſhes are to joyn with them in it; So, that neither by Gods Law, nor mans Law, doth this carry any incongruity with it. Yet neither from hence doth it follow that therefore it muſt be ſo, that the *Deacons* Office muſt extend in the exerciſe of it, as far, and no farther then the Preachers: The *Deacons* Office in the Churches of *Aſia*, was extended to ſend reliefe to the Churches of *Ieruſalem*, in a time of Famine; when yet they ſent not their Preachers to preach to them of *Jeruſalem*, becauſe there was no Famine of the Word; And the Churches at *Antioch* ſent ſome of their Elders to Preach, where they ſent none of their *Deacons* to diſtribute almes: All theſe things are to be managed and exerciſed as the common good of the Church doth require.

To their next head of Incongruities *from the mutuall duties which neceſſarily follow upon this ſtanding relation, Firſt, That the people muſt honour and eſteem, yea, yeeld maintenance to thoſe who thus ordinarily rule them,* which they prove *by* 2 Tim. 5. 17, 18. *and if that the Elders of a particular Flocke, are to have their maintenance for their preaching there, and performing the leſſer Acts of ruling there, much more ſhould they be maintained for performing the greater Acts in the Claſſis: What reaſon* (ſay they) *is there that particular Congregations ſhould maintain their own Elders for performing one part of the Elders work, and that they ſhould yet be bound to maintain the reſt for all the other part of the worke:*

and yet due it is from every person as he is able; how burthensome and confused a thing would this be?

To all which we Answer, that it is most true, that Elders are to be honoured and maintained for their works sake, even because they are wholly set apart to this work: and where they do the whole work of an Elder to a particular Congregation, it is requisite that they should receive a sufficient maintenance; but yet it follows not that all must necessarily contribute to their maintenance who receive any fruit of their Ministery: Suppose the State, or some able and well-affected person in a place should set apart a plentifull and honorable maintenance to a Minister, for the service of his Ministery in such a Congregation, so that he might live plentifully upon it, without the peoples contributing any thing to him, are the people notwithstanding bound to contribute another honorable maintenance to him, because of his work among them? or if a combination of Ministers should associate freely to bestow a weekly Lecture in some great town or City: yea, suppose they should do it every day of the weeke; Are the people to whom they are willing freely to Preach, bound to maintain all those?

Again it is a mistake *that our Brethren say, that Ministers united in Classicall Presbyteries have maintenance for performing one part of their Office.* We say, they performe all which belongs to their Office, which concernes their Congregation only, if they be able; their joyning in the Classes is for matters of common concernment, and to help them, wherein they are insufficient to do their own work belonging to their own Congregations.

To their second, wherein they say, *that those who are thus associated, must then be bound to all other Offices of Elders, as to visite the sick, to visit the people from house to house, to watch over them all, to preach to them in season and out of season.*

We answer as before, they are bound only by their Association to the duties for which they associate. *And as for the* Gravamen *of their: to make the Presbyterian way to appear worse then that of the Bishops.*

We answer, we are sorry *our Brethren* delight so much in this comparison; the *Bishops* arrogated to themselves to be the only Pastors of the Diocesse, rob'd the Pastors of their authority, spoiled the people of their Liberty, made all their servants and vassalls. The *Presbyterian* way is not that of Masters over Servants, but social, as between equalls, between brethren, friends, colleagues, confederates, &c. where all judge, and all are judged, where no Congregation is above another Congregation, no Minister above another Minister, where every Elder is left to injoy the whole office of an Elder, and each Congregation left to the freedome of a Congregation in what belongs to them, and they able to perform it, and the Classes, to corroborate strengthen and help them. We are not willing to say more of this odious comparison.

To

To their objection which they ſuppoſe may be made, *that they may part the work between them, of which they indeavour a large confutation.*

We anſwer, we never made this abſurd objection, we ſay not that men may part that work among many, and leave but one part of it to one, when God would have one do all; we ſay every Elder muſt indeavour to do all his own work, and be aſſiſtant to his Brethren in helping forward their work: But what ſtrength ſoever there be in their objection, ſure we are, the inſtances brought by *our Brethren* to confute it, are very improper to give a ſatisfactory ſolution. When the Elders among the *Hebrewes* are ſaid to *watch over the ſouls of the people*, and the ſame Elders are charged by *Peter to feed the flock of God among them*, the ſame charge which was given to the Elders of *Epheſus*, *Acts* 20. and this flock contained all the ſtrangers ſcattered throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia* and *Bithynia*; ſure theſe Elders were compel'd to part the work among them.

And further, whereas they demand, *Where hath the Scripture parted that work, ſo that he who is fixed in one Congregation to do all the work of an Elder, ſhould part with others in ſome of their work, & leave part of his to them?*

We anſwer, we affirm no ſuch thing, but on the other ſide we deſire *our Brethren* to ſhew where the Scripture hath made ſuch a fixing of an Elder to one Congregation, as that it ſhould be unlawfull for him to do any Act of an Elder to any part of the reſt of the Church of Chriſt, to whom he is yet given by Chriſt as an Elder. For our part we conceive that both the diviſion of the Church into Congregations, and of fixing particular Elders to them, is no further of divine Inſtitution then order and edification did firſt occaſion, and do ſtill require it ſhould be ſo; we conceive, it is here as it was in the Church of the Jewes, to whom the whole Tribe of *Levi* were given as their Miniſters. When all the *Iſraelites* lived together in one body (though many hundred thouſands) as when they were in the Welderneſſe, the whole Tribe of *Levi* were but as one body or Colledge of Elders to them all, and for ought we know fed them all in common, and afterwards when the Tribes came to be fixed in their ſeverall diviſions, the wiſe providence and grace of God ordered it ſo, that the *Levites* were alſo ſcattered, and fixed among them.

To their laſt head of incongruities, *that this is inconſiſtent with the ordinary way of the calling of Elders, both for their choyce and ordination; firſt, then all the people of theſe Congregations muſt chooſe all theſe Elders who rule them, as well as thoſe that are to preach to them*, as this they largely inſiſt upon, *deſiring to know under what notion or conſideration they are to chooſe him who is to be their ordinary fixt Elder, and the other, who are only to rule them.*

We anſwer, what ever the peoples right be in chooſing their Elders,

this

this Association is no abridgement of it in any kind: We say clearely, that the severall Congregations *singly* choose or except of the one to be their Pastor to doe all offices which concern a Pastor or Minister among them: And all the Congregations *joyntly* in this Association do choose or accept of, or associate with all the rest to be a Presbytery, to transact with themselves all matters of difficulty and common concernment.

And as to that aggravation added to this reason, *that if the highest Acts be committed to them, as that of* Excommunication (*of all punishments the most formidable, a matter of as great, if not more concernment, as life it self*) *the injoying of all ordinances for ever, together with the deposition of their Ministers, that then there is so much the more reason, that all the people should have the election of them.*

We answer, first, if all who are liable to excommunication, and injoyment of Ordinances, and Ministers, &c. must therefore elect them, then women must elect as well as men: Secondly, the censure of Excommunication, with the formidable consequences of it, are far more dangerous in *our Brethrens* way, then in this of the Presbyterie, because in this way, if any man be wronged, he may have the benefit of his appeale, and be cleared by more righteous Judges (a course ever followed by the Church, and agreeable to the light of nature) but in their way, if two or three (it may be) ignorant or corrupt Elders, prevailing with the *major* part of (it may be) a very small Congregation, do once deliver a man to Satan, and will not be induced by counsell to reverse their unrighteous sentence; the innocent wronged man must lie under this doome all the dayes of his life without any remedy, and must be held by all the Churches of Christ (to whom their sentence doth but *innotescere*) as an excommunicate person, and shun'd accordingly, none having power to absolve him. Thirdly, neither is the sentence of Excommunication so dreadfull as they make it, (for as the Apostle saith of the Magistrates Sword, *Rom.* 13. *If thou do well, &c.*) good men need not feare it, if men deserve it not, either it shall not touch them, or if it do, *clavis errans non ligat*, and if it be just, it was done in heaven before, and they only on earth declare and apply the will of Christ to him, and that for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved; and upon his repentance be received again into the bosome of the Church, and therefore *Excommunication* should be imbraced as a soul-saving Ordinance of Jesus Christ, as well as the Word and the Sacraments. And as to that of Ordination, we shall not need to say much, because our *Brethren* say little of it; and do in their judgements not look upon it as a matter of any great weight, esteeming the whole essence of the Ministeriall calling to be in the peoples choyce, and his ordination at sometimes not at all requisite; and when it is used, it is lookt upon only as a solemne admitting of him into his place.

To

To their Reaſons *againſt, and Exceptions to the firſt proof of the firſt Aſſertion,* viz. That the Church of *Jeruſalem* conſiſted of more Congregations then one, from the multitude of Beleevers.

Againſt Which

THey bring firſt Reaſons to ſhew there were not more then could meet in oue place.

"*The Holy Ghoſt hath from firſt to laſt* (ſay they) *as on purpoſe ſhewed* "*this: as if his ſcope had been before hand, to prevent and preclude all rea-* "*ſonings to the contrary.*

We incline to beleeve, that the Holy Ghoſt intended rather to ſhew the early accompliſhment of that Promiſe, *Ier.* 32. 39. of *Giving one heart and one way*, by his ſo frequent mentioning of ὁμοθυμαδὸν and ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ as adjuncts of the firſt Chriſtian Church meetings: then (as our *Brethren* ſuggeſt) to prevent and preclude all reaſonings againſt this Aſſertion of theirs, *viz.* "*That the Beleevers in Ieruſalem* were not more then could meet in one place.

"*To the firſt branch of their Argument brought from the forementioned* "*adjuncts as they ſtand upon Record*, Acts 1.14,15. *Reaſon* 1.

1. We anſwer, firſt, that their being ὁμοθυμαδὸν (which properly ſignifieth conſent of minds) doth not all argue their being in one place; a thouſand Congregations may be ſaid upon a Sabbath or Feaſt day to be ὁμοθυμαδὸν in prayer, and yet may be met in ſeverall and far diſtant places. *Anſw.* 1.

2. That their being aſſembled ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ doth not neceſſarily inforce it, becauſe here the words may, and in ſome places muſt admit of another Tranſlation, as *Act.* 4.26,27. where ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ſignifies not a convention of perſons in one place, (who can make it appear that ever *Herod, Pontius Pilate*, the *Gentiles*, and the *people of Iſrael* were ſo aſſembled againſt *Chriſt?*) but only a conſent of mindes in one thing. Accordingly in *Symmachus* his Tranſlation of the ſecond *Pſ.* out of which theſe words are taken, in ſtead of the *Septuagints* ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, we finde the word ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *Montanus* renders it *in idem*: and ſuch as meet in conſultation to carry on the ſame buſineſſe, may well be ſaid to be gathered together ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ. though they meet in ſeverall places: as with us, The *Lords* and *Commons* aſſemble themſelves ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, and are but one Parliament, though met in two Houſes.

3. Not denying thoſe, *Act.* 1. 15. to have mettogether in one place (though we deny the two adjuncts of ὁμοθυμαδὸν and ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ to prove it) our anſwer to the Argument is. *That it falls ſhort of what our Brethren intend to aſſert*: Becauſe it doth not appear from hence, that

the *whole Church* was there assembled, but the contrary rather. We will not insist upon the word ὀνομάτων (the number not of men, but of names) which according to some is to be restrained to men of chiefe Note and Eminencie, so *Rev.* 3.4. and *Chap.* 11.13. Nor will we urge that possibly these were such, every one whereof was capable of Election to an *Apostleship*: which was the Τὸ ἔργον of this meeting; (for that this was a different meeting from that spoken of *v.*14. is evident by the transition, *And in those dayes*, &c.) But this we say, That however taking in only men of Note and Disciples of longest standing in *Christs School* (Even *those that companied with the Apostles all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the Baptisme of Iohn unto the day of our Saviours Ascension*: of whom *ver.*21, 22.) It is very probable that the number of such did not exceed one hundred and twentie: yet that there were then no more Beleevers in *Jerusalem* cannot well be imagined by any that shall duly consider the Preparation made *for Christ* by *Iohns* Baptisme and Ministry: the yeares of *Christs* own Preaching and Miracles: the Commission he gave to the twelve *Apostles* and seventy *Disciples*, together with the operation which his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension had upon the Beholders. Who can but think that by all these many more then one hundred and twentie were converted to the Faith? When the Lord *Iesus* had but begun his Ministry, the Pharisees heard that he made and baptized more Disciples then *Iohn. Ioh.*4.1. of whom notwithstanding 'tis said, *Mar.* 1.5. *There went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Ierusalem, and were all baptized of him.* The same men afterwards took up this Complaint against *Christ*, Ioh.12.19. *Behold, the world is gone after him*: what ground had there been either for a Report or a Complaint of this nature, if the whole multitude of his *Disciples*, or of the Converts in *Ierusalem* had come within the narrow compasse of one hundred and twentie? 1 *Cor.*15.6. we read of five hundred Bethren before Christs Ascension.

4. Suppose it should be granted that the whole multitude of Beleevers in *Ierusalem* were here met in one place, it will not from thence follow, that so they might do, and did afterwards when the *Church* was multiplied.

Reas. 2. 2. "*But afterwards*, Acts 2.1. *Another meeting of theirs is expressed* "*in the same words, They were all met with one accord*, &c.

Answ. To which we Answer still: That it s not proved that they all there mentioned were *All the Church*. *Beza* saith, that in two ancient Copies he findes οἱ Ἀπόστολοι, and brings probable Reasons why they *All* should be meant of the *Apostles* only: As first, the coherence with the very last words of the fore-going Chapter mentioning the Eleven Appostles. Secondly, their being filled with the *Holy Ghost*, and speaking with tongues, *ver.*4. which was promised to the *Appostles*, and

and they commanded to wait at *Jeruſalem* for it, *Acts* 1.2,4,8. Thirdly, the multitudes calling them *Galileans*, *ver.*7. Fourthly, the not mentioning of any other in the whole Chapter but the *Apoſtles* only, *ver.* 14. *Peter* ſtands up with the *Eleven*, v.37. *They ſaid unto* Peter *and the reſt of the Apoſtles*, ver.42. *in the Apoſtles fellowſhip*, ver. 43. *ſignes were done by the Apoſtles*, from all which it is likely that this meeting was of the *Apoſtles* only, and if ſo, it's then nothing to our *Brethrens* purpoſe, however if it be a meeting of the whole Church, the Church was not then multiplied to a greater number then in the firſt Chapter. 2.

"*But when they were about three thouſand, yet ſtill ſome of their meet-* *Reaſ.*3.
"*ings for ſome Acts of Worſhip are recorded to have been as before*
"ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *and in ſtead of the other expreſſion* ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, *The place it*
"*ſelf where they were is ſet down, to ſupply and interpret it, and to ſhew, it*
"*was ſtill in one Aſſembly, as* ver.46. *They continued* ὁμοθυμαδὸν *in the*
"*Temple, where they moſt frequently met, not for Iewiſh Worſhip, but*
"*for hearing the Word, at which though the Iewes were preſent, yet it hin-*
"*dered not, but that to them it was a Church-meeting, &c.*

By all which, this only our *Brethren* undertake to prove, that ſome of their meetings for ſome Acts of VVorſhip were in one place, wherein they ſeeme to yeeld the cauſe: for if they could not meet together for all Acts of VVorſhip, and eſpecially for thoſe which are peculiar to Church-Communion, our Aſſertion is not at all infringed. They met indeed in the *Temple* to hear the Word, which (though no Iewiſh worſhip) yet was common to Iewes and Chriſtians, as themſelves confeſſe: But can they prove that in the *Temple* they adminiſtred the Sacraments, which are the diſtinguiſhing Ordinances of the Chriſtian Church? Interpreters of all ſorts from the very next words collect the contrary, *viz.* that the Lords Supper was adminiſtred in more private Congregations, *they continued daily with one accord in the Temple*, but it was from *Houſe* to *Houſe* that they brake bread, which was *Sacramentall* breaking of bread, as that phraſe is underſtood generally by all, *Acts* 20.7. and by our *Brethren* themſelves in the 42. *ver.* of this ſecond Chapter, where the *Syriack* hath the very word *Euchariſtia*, which is expreſſely ſaid, *ver.*46. to be κατ' οἶκον in oppoſition to ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ and for the phraſe κατ' οἶκον, we find it uſed for an houſe appointed for Church meeting, *Rom.*16.5. and 1 *Cor.*16.19. however it is not rationally ſuppoſable that the whole multitude of *Beleevers* met in the *Temple* to receive the Lords Supper: for firſt the Sacrament was no *Temple* Ordinance, and therefore not to be adminiſtred in the *Temple*: nor ſecondly could it have been done with ſafety: for if the *Apoſtles* were ſo quarrel'd for preaching *Jeſus* and the *Reſurrection* in the *Temple*, *Act.*4.2. (though never challenged for adminiſtring the Sacrament in it) and *Paul* ſo aſſaulted for being ſuppoſed to bring a *Greek* into the *Anſw.* *Brentius.* *Aretius.* *Beza.* *Beza.* *Rom* 16.

Temple, what would it have been to have brought in a new Ordinance, and a new worship into the *Temple*? *Our Brethren* themselves are sensible of this, and therefore although in the Assembly some of them disputed for their receiving the *Sacrament* in the *Temple*, yet now they wave it, and content themselves to say, they met there *some* times for *some Acts* of worship.

Reas. 4. "*Fourthly, say they, When there was a further addition,* Act. 5. 1. (*in which* "*Chapter is a paralell description to that,* Chap. 2. 43. ad finem) *speaking* "*of another meeting, the same words are used,* ver. 41. *That they were* "ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *as* Acts 2. *And in stead of the* Temple *there, is* Salomons "Porch *here: Which was a place large enough to hold them, called the* "Temple, Ioh. 10. 23. *the outward Court by* Iosephus, lib. 20. cap. 8. "*where* Christ *used to walk and preach, and the* Apostles *also,* Act. 3. 11. "*And that the* Apostles *only did not meet here, first, is apparent from the* "*paralell place,* Acts 2. *Secondly, its unlikely the* Apostles *should meet and* "*not the* People, *who are said to continue in the* Apostles *doctrin and fel-*

Answ. 1. *lowship.*

That this was another meeting cannot be denied, but that it was a meeting of *All the Church* or for *All Acts* of worship is not proved, nor can

2. be, which if not proved, this makes nothing against our Proposition.

Secondly, If this place be so paralell to that of *Act.* 2. 43. &c. the same

3. answer will serve here, which was made there, to which we refer them.

Pineda de rebus Salomonis, .3. c. 5. l. 5. c. 19. *Maldonat. in Ioan.* 10. 23.

Thirdly, What *Salomons Porch* in our Saviours time was, and why so called, is thought by some too difficult a question to be resolved.

Fourthly, In that place of *Iosephus* we find no mention of the outward Court, but he is conceived by *Pineda* to be contrary to himself in the description of the *Temple*, and the same Author conceiveth it was most unlikely to be *Atrium Populi*.

4. Fifthly, That they all that met here were *all the Church*, will not be

5. proved from the pretended paralell of *Acts* 2. and that the *Apostles* should meet with one accord without the *Church* is not so unlikely as is imagined, why might not the *Twelve* go to the *Temple* without the *Church* as well as *Peter* and *Iohn* did? *Acts* 3. 1. specially it not being said that they were preaching there, but working miracles; nor can the *All* here spoken of be referred to the *Church* in the 11. *ver.* more then to the *many which heard*, who were not of the *Church* expresst in the same verse, but rather appeares to be meant of the *Apostles* only, they being mentioned in this 12. *verse*.

Reas. 5. "*Fifthly, Further when they chose* Deacons, Acts 6. *which was cer-* "*tainly a* Church *meeting, they were yet no more then could meet in one* "*place; for the* Apostles *called the multitude, and* ver. 5. *they are called the* "*whole multitude. and* ver. 6. *they as in one place chose seven men, and* "*set them before the* Apostles, *who prayed, in which* duty *the whole mul-* "*titude had an Interest to joyn, &c.*

1. That

1. That this was a meeting for Church buſineſſe, we deny not. 2. But we do deny that the mentioning of the multitude and the whole multitude proves that all and every one of them that beleeved in *Jeruſalem* were at that meeting, for it may ſignifie either a great multitude, as *Luke* 8. 37. the *whole multitude of the Gadarens beſought Chriſt* to depart from them, and *Acts* 25.24. *Feſtus* ſaith, *All the multitude had dealt with him about Paul:* not every individuall *Gadaren* or *Iew*, but a great number of them, or the generalitie, which the *Greeks* uſe to expreſſe by πάνδημοι, or it may ſignifie as *Luk* 1.10. where it its ſaid the *whole multitude of the people were without, praying*, that is, *præſentium*, of them that were preſent, and not of all that were in *Ieruſalem:* ſo here the *ſaying pleaſed the whole multitude*, implies not that the whole multitude of all the *Beleevers* were preſent, but that ſo many as were preſent the ſaying pleaſed, and our *Brethren* themſelves grant that by *multitude* ſometimes is underſtood not *All* but *ſelect perſons*, as *Acts*. 15.12. *Then all the multitude kept ſilence*, which even themſelves will not expound of *All* the *Church*, but only of ſuch as were men of age & diſcretion, excluding women & children, who if excluded from the multitude there, why not here? eſpecially conſidering that this meeting was for the chooſing of *Church Officers:* wherein we ſuppoſe *our Brethren* will not allow women and children their ſuffrages. And indeed if we conſider the five thouſand, *chap.* 4. 4. and beſides the great additions and multiplications, *chap.* 5. 14. *Beleevers* were the more added to the *Lord*, multitudes both of men and women, and *chap* 6. 1. again it's ſaid the number of *Diſciples* was multiplied, we cannot in reaſon conceive that they all could meet in one place to be one Aſſembly, but muſt be diſtributed into ſeverall diviſions, as the 400000 men of *Iſrael* were, *Judg.* 20. elſe how could the Levite have told his ſad *Story* to them all together and at once: the like we may conceive of that Congregation, *Nehem.* 9. 5 where eight Levites ſpake to them all, which unleſſe it had been done to them divided into ſeverall companies, would have confounded both the people and themſelves.. *Anſw.* 1, 2.

" *And whereas* Our Brethren *urge their chooſing of* Officers, *and preſenting them before the* Apoſtles, *to prove their being aſſembled in one* " *place.* Let them but conſider how the City of *London* chooſe their Common-Councell, and preſent them to the Court of Aldermen. So that our anſwer to their fift reaſon is this, 'its not proved, nay, it's not probable that all the *Beleevers* there met. 2. Not in one Company. 3. Or were both proved, yet we ſay, more may meet for choiſe of Officers then can meet to receive the *Sacrament*.

" *After all this*, Acts 15. *they are ſaid to meet* ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *and naming* " *the place, where ſtill it imports one aſſembly, and after* Acts 21.22. *The* " *multitude muſt needs come together*, &c. *Reaſ.* 6.

Answ. 1. We answer, it's to be proved that that ὁμοθυμαδὸν relates to the whole body of the *Church*. We say to the Synod of the *Apostles* and *Elders*, as we shall shew hereafter. And secondly, ὁμοθυμαδὸν alone will never prove their meeting in one place, though we deny not, but here they were met in one. For that other Text *Act* 21. *The multitude must needs come together*, &c. how doth that prove there were at that time no more in the *Church* of *Jerusalem*, then might meet in one place? we may say of *London*, the multitude will come together upon such and such an occasion, doth this import no more in *London* then may meet in one place? besides the meeting there spoken of was like to be rather a concourse of a mis-informed multitude, then of a Congregation for worship; but however, we are glad *our Brethren* understand this multitude to be of the *Church* of *Jerusalem*, we are afraid they will forget it anon.

And for Conclusion, we humbly desire it may be observed, that all *our Brethren* have endeavoured to prove, is, that the *Beleevers* in *Jerusalem* were no more then could meet together in one place at some times, for some acts, as for choosing of *Officers*. So their first instance, and their fifth, for making of Decrees. So the sixth (out of both which Assemblies, women and children, a better half of the Company, are excluded) for hearing. So the second and third; but not a word brought to prove that they all met in one place to receive the *Sacrament*, as to that, they were severall Congregations. So that should we grant all these their instances, what would follow, but this? That the *Beleevers* at *Jerusalem* who received the *Sacrament* in severall places and Assemblies, and so were severall *Congregations*, did yet meet in one place, and one Assembly to choose *Officers*, *Acts* 1. 6. and to performe other Acts of Government, *Act.* 15. and therefore it is evident that although they were *severall Congregations*, yet they were under on *Presbyteriall* Government.

Except. 1. "*We come now to their exceptions against our proofes: The first whereof* "*is to the instance of five thousand*, Acts 4. *against which they object, first,* "*that it cannot be evinced, that these five thousand were a new number* "*added to the three thousand*, c. 2. Beza *and* Calvin *think those three thou-* "*sand are included here. Secondly, nay it is not certain that the five thou-* "*sand here were* Beleevers: *the* Greek *will as well carry it to expresse the* "*number of hearers. Thirdly,* ἀνδρῶν *when put alone (as here) includes* "*females as well as males. Fourthly, if to be understood of present Converts* "*and of males only, it would be a greater miracle then ever was be-* "*fore or since, &c.*

Augustin. in tract. 31. *in Ioan. Acesserunt corpori Domini, i.e. numero fidelium tria millia hominum, item alio facto quodam miraculo accesserunt alia quinque millia.*

We reply to the first, though *Calvin* and *Beza* think the three thousand formerly converted to be included here, yet divers both Ancient and

So is the Text understood by *Hierome*, *Chrysostome*, *Oecumenius*, *Lyra*, *Lorinus*, *Salmeron*; and of ours by *Arctius* and *Pelargus*, *Bullinger* makes it doubtfull.

and Moderne Interpreters are of another mind. And we have not only teſtimony but reaſon to induce us to be of the ſame opinion; not to inſiſt upon that which ſome obſerve, that as the three thouſand *Acts* 2. 41. did not comprehend the one hundred and twenty mentioned *Acts* 1. So it holds proportion that the three thouſand mentioned there, are not comprehended here, but this we affirme that the latter part of this 4 *ver.* of *Acts* 4. is exegeticall of the former, now the former part muſt needs be meant of thoſe that were won to the Faith at that Sermon, and therefore the latter part muſt be underſtood of them alſo; beſides, this Sermon was not *ex intentione* to the Church, but upon occaſion of the multitude flocking together to behold the *Miracle*, to whom *Peter* and *John* preached in the *Temple*, whilſt the *Church*, or a great part of it, might, it is likely, be attending in private upon the Miniſtry of the other *Apoſtles*, of whom no mention is made in this paſſage but of *Peter* and *John* only.

To the ſecond we ſay, that the true Syntax of the *Greeke* carries the number to *Beleevers*, and not to *Hearers*; πολλοὶ δὲ, many of them that *heard* the Word *Beleeved*; and if you aske how many, the Holy Ghoſt tels ye the number of thoſe many *Beleevers* was about five thouſand. Secondly, the *Spirit* of God doth not uſe to compute the number of bare *hearers*. Thirdly, we know no Interpreters that ſo expound the place.

"*As for the reaſon they ſeeme to alleadge, why it ſhould be meant of the* "*number of* hearers, *viz. becauſe that ſuch a multitude ſhould heare the* "Apoſtles *was the thing that fretted the Phariſees.* We anſwer. 1. That the aggrieved perſons mentioned *v.* 1. and 2. were the *Sadducees* and not the *Phariſees*. Secondly, 'Twas not ſo much the multitude of *Hearers*, as the Doctrin taught that ſo vexed them, as is expreſt *ver.* 2. Becauſe they preached through *Jeſus* the *Reſurrection* which the *Sadduces* denied; and thirdly, ſhould we grant that the *Multitude* was the thing that fretted them, certainly it would vex them more that five thouſand *beleeved* that Doctrin, then that five thouſand *heard* it.

To the third, though we contend not much that by ἀνδρῶν here, Males only ſhould be meant, yet it may ſeeme probable, if firſt we conſider that the Cuſtome of the *Iewes* was to number only the *Males*. Secondly, if we compare *Ioh.* 6. 10. with *Mat.* 14. 21. Ἄνδρες, ſet alone in *John* it is expounded to be beſides women and children in *Matth.* But thirdly, take women & children and all in, yet adde thoſe other new Multitudes mentioned, *Act.* 5. 14. *Act.* 6. 1. *Act.* 6. 7. & we yet affirm they were more then could meet together in one place to receive the *Sacrament*.

To the fourth, *viz.* that this (if thus underſtood) would be a greater miracle then any before or ſince. We anſwer. 1. That the like may be

ſaid

said of the three thousand converted, *chap.* 2. that it was such a thing as was never before nor since, if (as they think) there were not 5000 converted here, shall we question the truth of that therefore? Secondly, it was the day of *Christs* power, in which his willing people from the wombe of that morning ('twas foretold) should be multiplied as the Dew upon the earth, *Psal* 110.3.

Eccep. 2. "*The second Exception is, That it may be supposed that those that were* "*converted at* Jerusalem *remained not constant* members *of that* Church. "*For first the* 3000 chap. 2, *were not dwellers at* Jerusalem, *but strangers* "*out of all those countries mentioned in that chapter who came up to* Pen- "tecost. *Secondly, and therefore were (as some interpret it)* Sojourners *at* "Jerusalem, *not dwellers, as* Eliah *in* 1 Kings 17. 20. *sojourned with the* "*widow of* Sareptha, Μισθ' ἧς ἤγω κ παροικῶ, *saith the Septuagint, the very* "*word here used. Thirdly, they are said to be dwellers of* Mesopotamia, "Cappadocia, &c. ver. 9. and dwellers *of* Jerusalem *and those Countries* "*too, they could not be. And fourthly, that which strengthens this, is that,* "ver. 5. *They are said to be* Κατοικοῦντες ἐν Ιερουσαλὴμ, *but* ver. 9. Κατοικοῦντες τὴν "Μεσοποταμίαν. *Therefore fifthly, the* 14. ver. *calls them* men Iewes *and* "dwellers *at* Jerusalem, *as two sorts, and* ver. 22 men *of* Israel, *the stile* "*given the* ten Tribes, *and* ver. 5. *devout men who used to come up at those* "*solemne Feasts, and after a time to return to their families again.*

Answ. To all which our reply is this: first we find it not elsewhere said in Scripture, that those who came up to the Feasts at *Jerusalem* were Κατοικοῦντες ἐν Ιερουσαλὴμ, and though Κατοικῶ, sometime possibly may be put for παροικῶ, and so may signifie to sojourn, yet by our Brethrens own confession, it may signifie to dwell. *Eliahs* sojourning with the widdow was שנים a yeare, so in the margent the word is rendred, and so *Judges* 17. 10. and *Judges* 11. the last *vers.* and 1 *Sam.* 7. 16. and let our Brethren grant these but so long abode at *Jerusalem*, it might be long enough to make them members of that Church. And why it should signifie to sojourne at *Ierusalem*, *ver.* 5. and to dwell in *Mesopotamia*, *ver.* 9. we see not: for their *Criticisme* of, ἐν Ιερουσαλὴμ will not prove it, seeing that *Act.* 16. 4. themselves will needs understand by, τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ιερουσαλὴμ, not the Elders that were present at *Ierusalem*, but the Elders fixed in, and Officers of the *Church* of *Ierusalem*.

To that of *Acts* 2. 14. (*Men Iewes and dwellers at Ierusalem*) We answer, the words need not imply two sorts, at least in our Brethrens sence, namely of some *Iewes* living in the *Country*, and others dwelling at *Ierusalem*, but all may be of *Jerusalem* notwithstanding that expression, thus; *Men Iewes* may be understood of those of the *Iewish* nation; All ye that dwell at *Ierusalem* of the *Proselytes*, who being converted

converted to the *Iewiſh* Religion, had for Religions ſake there taken up their dwelling: ſo for that of the 22. *v. Men* of *Iſrael*; the ſtile, ſay they, *given to the ten Tribes*, We anſwer, that phraſe is not proper to the ten Tribes, but applied to the *Iewes*, nay to the dwellers of *Ieruſalem*, as *Acts* 3.12 and *Act.* 5. & 35. where *Gamaliel* ſpeaking to the Councell of *Ieruſalem*, ſaith, Yea *Men* of *Iſrael*. And for the appellation of devout *Men*, *ver.* 5. that makes nothing againſt us, but what is there added, *viz.* that theſe devout men were dwelling at *Ieruſalem* is much for us.

2 But granting ſecondly, That many of thoſe of whom this *chap.* ſpeaks had been formerly dwellers in *Meſopotamia* and *Cappadocia*, *&c.* what hinders but that they might now be dwellers at *Ieruſalem?* The occaſion of their comming up thither at this time, being not only the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt* (which was a Feaſt but of one day) but alſo the great expectation, that the people of the *Iewes* then had, of the appearance of the *Meſſiah* in his Kingdom (as we may collect from *Luke* 19. 11. where it's ſaid, They thought the *Kingdom* of God ſhould immediately appear) ſo that now they might chooſe to take up their dwellings at *Ieruſalem*, and not return as they had been wont at the end of their uſuall Feaſts. 2.

But nature taught them (ſaith our *Brethren*) to provide for their wives and children, and not deſert them. *Obje.* 11.

And how know we but they might bring up their wives and children with them, which ſome did in thoſe ordinary Feaſts, and therefore might be more likely upon this extraordinary occaſion? 2. Or why might they not fetch up their families to them? which is more probable then that they would leave the Apoſtles fellowſhip to go back to their families, eſpecially conſidering that their hearts were inflamed with ſuch an abundant love to the Goſpel, and Church of Chriſt, as that they ſold their poſſeſſions, and parted them to all men, as every man had need, *chap.* 2. *ver.* 45. and *chap.* 4. 34, 35. thereby outing themſelves of their former poſſeſſions, and providing for their own Subſiſtence at *Ieruſalem*, and the ſupport of others that had need, who upon the ſame ground continued there with them: nor is it very probable that men thus ſpirited, ſhould mind returning to their own poſſeſſions, in caſe they had not ſold all. Thirdly, but however we have light enough from Scripture to prove (and that according to our *Brethrens* principles and aſſertions) that they were all members of the Church of *Ieruſalem*. Thus. They which are added to the Church, continue in Church Communion, put their eſtates into the Churches common Treaſury, chooſe Officers for the Church, are Members of the ſame Church: but theſe multitude of Beleevers were added to the Church, *Acts* 2. laſt, &c. Therefore all that whole multitude *Anſw.*

were members of that Church; yea our *Brethren* themſelves take that fellowſhip of theirs, *Acts* 2.42. for a patterne of ordinary Church Communion. And ſhould we grant this Church to be ebbing and flowing, as our *Brethren* ſpeak, in point of reſidence of Members, yet thoſe Members that were non reſident, were for all that members of that Church: Are not ſome members of *our Brethrens* Congregations ſo? yea have they not their dwellings ſometimes at greater diſtance from the uſuall place of their Church-meeting, then the utmoſt borders *Judea* were from *Hieruſalem*, and members ſtill? and yet according to *our Brethrens* aſſertion, the number of members, whether reſident or not, muſt not be more then that they might (did they all reſide) meete together in one place.

Object. "*But ſome of theſe were of* Judea, *the Countrey about, and that of theſe* "*might be Churches erected in their proper dwellings is rationally ſuppoſe-*
"*able: for* Acts 8.1. *it is ſaid,* Paul *perſecuted Diſciples in other places*
"*beſides* Hieruſalem, *as* Acts 26. *at* Damaſcus, *and upon the ceaſing of the*
"*perſecution its ſaid,* the Churches had reſt throughout all *Judea, Act.* 9 31.

Anſw. Our anſwer to this, ſhall be no other then what *our Brethren* make their fourth exception, *viz.* That this being the firſt Church, and whereof all the Apoſtles were the Officers, the beleevers who dwelt there (we adde and who dwelt neare) would certainly abide together as one Church, without parting or dividing, till they came to the utmoſt proportion that the conſtitution of a Church was capable of, to a *maximum quod ſic*: And therefore it is not ſo rationably ſuppoſeable, that thoſe that lived ſo neare *Jeruſalem*, would ſo ſoone erect Churches in their proper dwellings; nor will *Pauls* perſecuting the Saints in other places beſides *Jeruſalem*, prove Churches in *Judea*; for the very text cited, *Acts* 8.1. expreſſeth, that thoſe of the Church of *Jeruſalem*, were ſcattered abroad throughout all *Judea* and *Samaria*, ſo that ſtill they whom *Paul* perſecuted unto ſtrange Cities, were Members of the Church of *Jeruſalem*; and this *Paul* himſelfe tells us, *Acts* 26. yet we deny not, but that they who were thus ſcartered abroad, preaching the word, *Acts* 8.4. Churches were erected in *Iudea, Galile* and *Samaria*, of whom it is ſaid, *Acts* 9.31. that the perſecution ceaſing, they were edified and multiplied.

Excep. "*Their third Exception is, That they in thoſe Conntries had great*
"*Aſſemblies, conſiſting of many thouſand hearers at once, that could*
"*and did hear; So Chriſt,* Luke 12.1. *preached to* Myriads, *many thou-*
"*ſands: So* Acts 13.45. *almoſt the whole city came to heare the Word*
"*of God by* Paul; *at* Charenton *many thouſands heare in one place, as is*
"*well knowne, and ſo in many places in England;* Moſes *ſometimes*
"*ſpake in the ears of all the people, ſo* Ezra chap. 10. 9, 10. *and it is*

known

"*known by experience, that in hot Countries, as Men may ſee further by*
"*reaſon of the pureneſſe of the ayre, ſo they may hear at a greater diſtance*
"*then in cold.*

We anſwer, firſt, that we reade *Luk.* 12. of *Myriads*, (or as our Engliſh tranſlation renders it) an innumerable multitude gathered together, ſo that they trod one upon another, but not, firſt that they all heard, nor ſecondly that Chriſt preached to them all, the Text is expreſſe, *Jeſus began to ſay to his Diſciples*; and though upon occaſion of a queſtion made by one of the company, *ver.* 13. he ſpeakes ſomething appliable to the people, *ver.* 14. yet he returnes to preach to his Diſciples againe, *verſ.* 22. As for that in the 54 *verſe*, its queſtion whether that be part of the ſame Sermon. To that *Acts* 13. 45. *The whole City came together to heare, &c.* We anſwer, That City was *Antioch* of *Piſidia*, and how do they prove that to be ſo populous a City? Or ſecondly, That all they that came together heard the word, it is ſaid indeed, they came together to heare the word, but many more might come together intentionally to heare, then actually did or could heare, as in many aſſemblies in this City. Thirdly, the Text makes equall mention of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as both ſpeaking to the people, and why then might they not be in diſtinct aſſemblies or diviſions?

As to that of *Charenton*, where they ſay, *It is well knowne many thouſands heare*: We anſwer, firſt, That the number of the Members of that Church doth not (probably) ariſe to the number of them in *Jeruſalem*, when at higheſt before the diſperſion. Secondly, That their meeting place, (*as it is well knowne*) hath ſuch accommodation of ſeats and double Galleries, as they had not either in the Temple or *Solomons Porch*. Thirdly, Beſides that large meeting place thus accommodated, they have (as we are informed) on Sacrament dayes, two other places where they then preach and adminiſter, and yet but one Church. The like anſwer will ſerve in part for *England*; There do not meete ſo many (that can heare) as were of the Church of *Jeruſalem*. Secondly, They have better accommodation then they had: and Thirdly, More may heare at once then can at once receive the Sacrament: and therefore in great Congregations, they are neceſſitated to receive ſome at one time, and ſome at another.

For that of *Moſes*, its true, we reade he ſpake in the eares of the people, but doe *our Brethren* in good earneſt beleeve, that *Moſes* had ſuch a ſtrong voice as could reach to all *Iſrael* at once? who the laſt time before this that they were numbred, were ſixe hundred thouſand, one thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty, *Numbers* 26. 51. beſides twenty three thouſand Levites, and they males only, *verſe* 62. that phraſe therefore of ſpeaking Deut 5.1.

in all their eares, muſt neceſſarily be ſome other wayes underſtood; as firſt either in their preſence, to them being preſent, as *Deodate* renders it, *Gen.* 20.8. and *Gen.* 44.18. *in loro preſenza*; Or ſecondly Mediately, he to ſome, and they to others, as is propable, *Exod.* 11.1. where *Moſes* is commanded to ſpeake in the eares of the people, that every man and woman borrow Jewels, *&c.* who were not (in all likelihood) ſuffer'd to leave their taskes to meet all together to hear that Proclamation: Or thirdly, *Turmatim & ſucceſſive*, they were ſpoken to in ſeverall companies, *Moſes* to one, and ſome others joyned with him to others; as *Deut.* 32.44. it is ſaid, *And* Moſes *ſpake in the ears of the people, he and* Hoſhea *the ſon of* Nun: Or fourthly, By all the people, is meant all the heads and Rulers of them, as *Deut.* 31.30. *Moſes* is ſaid to ſpeak in the ears of all the Congregation; yet *verſe* 28. the Elders of the Tribes only were gathered together for him to ſpeak to: the like anſwer may be given to that inſtance of *Ezra*.

To that experiment, which *our Brethren* mention of hearing at a farther diſtance in pure ayre and in hot Countries then in cold, we oppoſe the judgement of that great Maſter of Experiments in this kind, the Lord of *Verulam*, who in his Centuries expreſly ſaith, *The thinner or dryer ayre, carrieth not the ſound ſo well as the more denſe, &c.*

Nat. hiſt. cent. 2. n. 143. cent. 3. n. 217, 218.

The queſtion is not, how many may meet together to heare, but how many may meet together to partake in all Ordinances of Church fellowſhip, eſpecially in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: And in this we appeale to *our Brethren*, whether they think the *Myriads*, *Luke* 12.1. ſo thronged that they trod one upon another, could in that throng have received the Sacrament? and ſo for thoſe other vaſt multitudes, in whoſe hearing (as they ſay) and in their ſenſe, *Moſes*, *Ezra* and *Paul* ſpake? or whether more thouſands in one aſſembly may receive the Sacrament in a hot Countrey, then in a cold? and whether the heat of the Climate and pureneſſe of the ayre they ſpeak of, will helpe more to meet in one roome, as well as to heare, as they conceive, at a more remote diſtance?

Except. 4. "*The fourth Exception is a ſtrong Argument for us; That this being* "*the firſt Church, and whereof all the Apoſtles were Officers, thoſe there-*
"*fore who dwelt there* (we adde upon the ſame ground, who were con-
"verted there, and joyned in Church-fellowſhip with them) *would*
"*certainly abide together as one Church, till they came to the utmoſt propor-*
"*tion, that the conſtitution of a Church is capeable of, a* Maximum quod
"ſic, *for the more united ſtrength and glory of Religion and Chriſtian com-*
"*munion in holding forth the Name of Chriſt in one body.*

We grant this, and therefore ſay; That when the number of *Beleevers* was ſo increaſed, that they could not hold viſible communion together

ther in one aſſembly in all acts, they were inforced to divide themſelves into diſtinct Congregations for acts of worſhip; yet that they might hold communion as far as it was poſſible, for acts of government, they continued one Church, one body; and ſuppoſing more Congregations there then one (which we conceive abundantly proved) judge whether it make more for the united ſtrength and glory of *Religion* and *Chriſtian Communion* in holding forth the Name of Chriſt in one body, that each of theſe Congregations ſhould be ſo compleat a *Church* as to be *Independent* from all the reſt, or that many of thoſe Congregations ſhould be united in one government, and ſo tranſact their affaires, *communi conſilio* as one Church.

"*Nor would their fift Exception much prejudice us ſhould we grant the* Except. 5.
"*whole. They had, ſay they, till* Pauls *perſecution, the greateſt liberty, and*
"*freedome even to the utmoſt; they had favour with all the people, and the*
"*Rulers durſt not puniſh* Peter *and* John *for fear of the people, &c.*

Bate ſomething of the greateſt liberty to the utmoſt, when *Peter* and *John* immediately after the Miracles, and while they were preaching, were haled to priſon before the peoples faces, *Acts* 4.1,3. and all the Apoſtles were laid hold of, put in the common Goale, threatned and beaten, *Acts* 5. 17, 18, 40. If we had ſuch meaſures, we ſhould not account it the greateſt liberty to the utmoſt. The peoples favouring and magnifying them, only ſhewes they were not at that time active in the perſecution, but all the *Sanedrim* were. For their not puniſhing of them by reaſon of the people, it was only that they durſt not put them to death upon that occaſion, the Miracle being ſo freſh and notorious: But ſecondly, Should we grant what *our Brethren* ſay, they had liberty to the utmoſt, we might from it more probably collect the increaſes of the Church to have been ſo many and great, that they could not but exceed the bounds of one ſingle Congregation.

"*They tell us, it was no new thing among the Jewes, for Sects to have*
"*great multitudes to cleave to them, and for them to baptiſe openly, as*
"John Baptiſt *and Chriſt did.*

Surely it is not for the honour of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, to have the *Chriſtian Church* thus ranckt with *Sects*: and to what purpoſe is this? *Our Brethren* will not ſay, there were no more of the Sect of the *Phariſees* then could meet in one place and make one Congregation, or that *John* and *Chriſt* baptized no more then could make one ſingle Congregation; and if the liberty granted to other *Sects* made them ſo numerous, why may we not thinke that the number of *Beleevers* was farre greater then any of thoſe Sects, the Apoſtles confirming their doctrine by ſo many Miracles?

THe Brethren having in the Assembly affirmed, that, though it should be granted that the number of Beleevers in *Jerusalem* before the dispersion was so great, that they could not meet together in one place; yet the persecution so wasted and scattered them, as that there were no more left then might meet in one *Congregation*. This ingaged the Assembly in a dispute about it, and after many dayes dispute it was resolved upon the question:

That the dispersion mentioned Acts 8. *doth not prove such a scattering, as that there might not remain more Congregations then one in that Church: and for confirmation hereof were brought,* Acts 9.31. Acts 12.24. Acts 21.20.

"NOw *against this Proposition* our Brethren *argue from the great-*
"*nesse of the* Persecution *that caused the* dispersion, *that it was*
"*great for intension, reaching to* imprisonment *and* death, *Chap.* 22.4.
"*And for extent, it reached to all sorts both* Preachers *and* Christians;
"Acts 8.1. *it is said indefinitly to be against the Church, and Verse* 3.
"*its called an entring into every* House, *and haling* Men *and* Women *to*
"*prison, and Chap.* 20. Paul *saith he imprisoned many of the* Saints, *not*
"Preachers *only*; *and that this is an observable difference between this*
"persecution, *and that mentioned,* Acts 12. *that there its said* Herod
"*vexed certain of the* Church; *but here that* Paul *made havock of the*
"Church, *and that they were all scattered except the Apostles.*

To which we answer, The *persecution* was indeed great and generall against all the Saints promiscuously, but therefore we conceive would make more *Congregations* in *Ierusalem* then there were before, though it made them smaller. They could not now meet in the *Temple*, daily, nor possibly at their wonted *meeting houses*: but yet certainly even then they had their meetings and Congregations. No terrors could make them forsake the assembling of themselves together. In that other *persecution*, *Acts* 12. we find the Church assembled in severall places They were praying in the house of *Mary*, *ver.* 12. there was one; to which *Peter* comes and tells them the manner of his delivery, and bids them go and tell it to *Iames* and to to the *Brethren*, there was another: so it was in that *persecution*, and so it might be (nay was likely to be) in this.

Object. "*No* say our Brethren, *for the Text saith expresly they were all scattered*
"*except the* Apostles.

To which we answer, they *All must be understood either of all the Beleevers, or all the Teachers and Church Officers in the Church of* Ierusalem, *except Beleevers*; but it cannot be understood of *all the Beleevers*, that they all were scattered, and therefore it must be understood of *Teachers*, and that for two Reasons.

First,

Firſt, becauſe the Particle πλὴν uſed with the *Genitive caſe* in the *New Teſtament*, is alwaies exceptive to the utmoſt; and therefore (according to *our Brethrens* ſenſe) would imply that there was not one *Beleever* left in *Ieruſalem* beſides the *Apoſtles*, which cannot be. For the Text ſaith that *Paul* broke into houſes, and haling *Men* and *Women*, committed them to *priſon*, *ver.*3. and this he did in *Ieruſalem*, *Act.*26. 10. Therefore *all the Beleevers* were not ſcattered abroad through the *Regions of Iudæa*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*, ſome of them were in priſon at *Ieruſalem*; and to what purpoſe can we imagine did the *Apoſtles* (who in all their motions and ſtaies were directed by the Spirit of God) tarry at *Ieruſalem*, unleſſe it were to comfort and ſupport the *Church* there, in the rage of this *perſecution* which had ſcattered their other *Officers* and *Teachers* from them? Ioh. 8.10. Act. 15.28 & 22.22. Mar. 12. 32.

Secondly, it appears that they were the *Teachers* who were thus *all ſcattered* except the *Apoſtles*, for it is there ſaid, They that were ſcattered, went every where *preaching the Word*, ver.4.

"*To this* our Brethren *reply*, *That is not only called* Teaching *which is* "*by way of* Sermon *to a multitude*; *for* ver. 25. *of this* Chapt. *'tis ſaid* "*that* Philip *taught the* Eunuch *in a private conference*, *and* Aquila *and* "Priſcilla *taught* Apolos.

But we anſwer, the Text ſpeaks not of *teaching*, but of *preaching*, they went every where εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον, *preaching* the Word: *Teaching* may be *Actus charitatis*, but *Preaching* is *Actus officii*, how can they preach except they be ſent? *Rom.*10.

"*But they are not called* εὐαγγελισταὶ, *as having an an office*, *but* εὐαγγελι- *Object.*
"ζόμενοι, *as referring to an act*, *and it was ordinary in thoſe times for men* "*that were not by office* Miniſters, *occaſionally to teach the Word in private* "*converſe and otherwiſe*, *and theſe went out by* perſecution *not by* "miſſion.

That in thoſe times *Men* not in office did *teach* by private *converſe* *Anſw.* we deny not, but we ſpeak not here of *teaching* but of *preaching*, and if εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον refer to the act, yet to the act af *men* in office, Luke 8.1. we deſire *our Brethren* to produce one text of Scripture, where Luke 9.6. εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον is uſed of any that are not *Preachers* by office; Luk. 20.1. we can bring many where tis uſed of thoſe that are, even by the *Penman* of this *Hiſtory*; ſo that we conclude that theſe εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον had their Commiſſion to preach before, though this *perſecution* occaſioned their *miſſion* into *Iudea* and other places to preach there. Act. 5.42. Act. 8.12. Act. 10.36

"*But can we think* (*ſay they*) *the* Teachers *were ſcattered*, *and the ordi-* *Object.*
"*nary* Beleevers *were not*; *except we ſuppoſe the people more conragious* "*to ſtay by it*, *then their* Teachers?

We dare not ſay that thoſe that are ſcattered in a time of *perſecution* *Anſw.*

are lesse couragious then those that stay and suffer. In Queen *Maries* dayes many *Preachers* fled beyond sea; whether it were that God had present imploiment for them there, or did it to reserve them for future service in their return home, we do not say; but we dare not say that they were lesse couragious then those that staid by it, and died for it. In the late times of *Prelaticall* rage and *persecution* many were scattered into forrein parts, whilst others that did abide by it had triall of cruell mockings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments, shall we say, that those were lesse couragious then these?

But should we grant that this dispersion was not only of the *Teachers*,
2. but of the multitude of *Beleevers*, we yet might answer, Secondly, that though this *persecution* was great, yet it was but short; and it cannot be imagined, but they who were scattered by the *persecution*, would upon the ceasing of it return again to *Ierusalem*, and that upon the grounds laid down by *our Brethren* in their fourth exception.

3. Should we grant they were so scattered that they never returned to *Ierusalem* again, Yet this doth not weaken our Proposition or the main proof of it; because we must rather look to the first frame of that Church, then to their condition under *persecution*, which was but accidentall; so that *our Brethren* either mistake themselves, or wrong us, when they say that we build an *It may be* upon an *It might be*.

For we proved our *it may be* by the State of the Church of *Ierusalem* before the *dispersion*, and only to take off an Objection made by them, we say *it might be* that after the dispersion there were more *Beleevers* in *Ierusalem* then could meet in one place. And to prove this we bring *Acts* 9.31. where its said the *persecution* ceasing, the *Churches* were multiplied, or according to the Originall ἐπληθύνοντο, were filled up, and *Acts* 12.24. the word of God grew and multiplied: and *Acts* 21.20. where we read of many thousands or *Myriads* of *Iewes* which beleeved. To which *our Brethren* except as followeth.

"*First to that* Acts 9.31. *they say, that* ἐπληθύνοντο *doth not signifie ordinarily a great number made up, but an increase in measure, not in number; so* Mat. 24.12. 1 Pet. 1.2. *Grace be multiplied, &c.* Secondly, "*They are the Churches of* Judea, Galilee, *and* Samaria, *that are there spoken of; and what is that to prove more in the Church of* Ierusalem "*then could meet in one?*

Act. 6.1. Act. 6.7. Act. 7.17. Whereto we reply first, that the word πληθύνω doth properly signifie to increase in number, and not in measure, and accordingly is translated to be multiplied. Πλῆθος the Noune from whence its derived, in the whole New Testament is translated *multitude*, and this Verbe that commeth of it throughout the whole book of the *Acts*, when applied to the *Church*, is only so used and accordingly translated. Nor can it being

applied

applied to perſons be otherwiſe underſtood, what ever it may of *ſinnes* and *graces* in the Texts by them produced, yet even in them the word is capable of this conſtruction, as might eaſily be ſhowne, were it needfull or expedient.

Secondly, though they be the Churches of *Judea, Galilee* and *Samaria* that are mentioned, yet the Church of *Jeruſalem* therein muſt needs be contained and included. Firſt, if *Jeruſalem* were in *Judea*; ſecondly, it being expreſſed, ὅλῃ Ἰουδαίᾳ all, or whole *Judea*, of which *Jeruſalem* was a part; and this thirdly, not in contra-diſtinction to *Jeruſalem*, as in ſome other places, as *Mar.* 1. 5. *Matth.* 4. 25. *Acts* 26. 1c. but to *Samaria* and *Galilee*, in which conſtruction *Jeruſalem* (not being named) is included, as *Mark* 3. 7. *Acts* 10. 37. ſhould we ſay the Churches of all *England*, and *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, are in a Covenant? would not any common underſtanding take the Churches of *London* to be included here? Nay, fourthly, were *Judea* ſet alone by it ſelf, yet it may and doth include *Jeruſalem*, which *our Brethren* cannot upon good ground deny. In *Luke* 1. 5. *Luke* 3. 1. *Acts* 28. 21. *Acts* 11. 1, 29 1 *Theſ.* 2. 14. and which themſelves in *Acts* 15. 1. do upon another occaſion and leſſe reaſon aſſert, where they will have *Judea* not only to include *Ieruſalem*, but will needs have it put for *Ieruſalem*. Fifthly, if *our Brethren* ſay that the *Church of Jeruſalem* was not included in theſe *Churches of Judea*, that had reſt, and were edified and multiplied, they muſt ſhew that it then was troubled and leſſened: but ſixthly, if other Churches of *Judea* were ſo increaſed and multiplied, we may conclude the *Church of Ieruſalem*, who had a greater proportion of meanes, even the Miniſtry of the whole *Colledge* of the *Apoſtles*, was multiplied much more; ſo that all the *Beleevers* there could not for all Acts of Worſhip meet together in one Congregation.

To *Act.* 12. 24. *our Brethren* except nothing. But to *Act.* 21. 20. they ſay, "*Firſt, that it was the Feaſt of* Pentecoſt *when* Paul *came to* Jeruſalem "(*as they would prove by his journall*) *and therefore no wonder if he found* "*thouſands of the beleeving Iewes there, that were come up from all quar-*"*ters*; *and verſe* 17. *ſome of them are expreſly ſaid to be Iewes of* Aſia, "*not of* Judea. *Secondly, the word* μυριὰς *being put alone without any word* "*of number, ſignifieth only a greater multitude, as* μυρίον πλῆθος, *&c. and being* "*put indefinitely, is all one, as to ſay thouſands or many*. To which we anſwer.

To the firſt, that we contend not much whether *Paul* came to *Ieruſalem* by *Pentecoſt* or no, as not making much either againſt us or for us. Some that ſay he was at *Ieruſalem* at *Pentecoſt*, think he came thither eight or ten daies before: but ſo timely before the Feaſt thoſe *Myriads* were not likely come up, it being the time of their Wheat-harveſt, which needleſly they would not abſent themſelves from, & which ſome conceive *Anſw.*

was the reason why this Feast of *Pentecost* was but of one day, whereas the two other Anniversary Feasts continued seven dayes.

Which Ptolomy *makes 25. miles from* Troas, *some a great deal more.* Miletus *was from* Ephesus *according to* Ptolomy *45. miles.* Merc. *makes it above 50.* Chrysost. *indeavours a computation of these dayes, but it is but conjectural.*

But we suppose *our Brethren* know its controverted, whether *Paul* were at *Jerusalem* at this Feast or no? and denied by some; and if we also should deny it, it will be hard for them to demonstrate it, till they can manifest how long after the dayes of unleavened bread *Pauls* journey began, chap. 20. 6. how long he was going on foot to *Assos*, vers. 13. and from thence to *Mitylene*, vers. 14 how long he tarried at *Trogyllium*, vers. 15. how long at *Miletus*, before he sent for the *Elders* at *Ephesus*, (some say of *Asia*,) ver. 17. how long it was before they could come, ver. 18. how long he continued there before he departed, ver. 38. how long in passing thence to *Choos*, chap. 21. 1. and some *Rhodes* to *Patara* in the same verse, and how long he stayed there, and then how long from his setting forth from thence, till leaving *Cyprus* he sailed to *Syria*, and landed at *Tyre*, ver. 2, 3. how long in passing from thence to *Ptolomais*, ver. 7. how many those many dayes were that he stayed at *Philips* house, ver. 10. and how long he was going thence to *Jerusalem*, and the very day he arrived there; none of which are in the Story particularly expressed, and then adding the many dayes besides which are set down, Chap. 20. 6, 7, 15. Chap. 21. 1, 4, 7, 8. shew that all these amount not to above 42 dayes, for *Paul* had no more to finish his course in for *Philippi* to *Jerusalem*, however *the Brethren* to make it probable that he was there at *Pentecost*, lengthen the time, and shorten the way, from these 42 dayes they make eight weekes, and make it about forty miles from *Tyre* to *Jerusalem*, whereas measuring in a direct line, it was 90; but that way which *Paul* went, coasting by *Ptolomais* and *Cæsarea*, it was very neare 120.

But secondly, should we grant *Our Brethren* that he was there at *Pentecost*, we must yet put them to another proofe of all the *Jewes* among the *Gentiles*, being bound or wonted to come to this Feast (it especially being but of one day) from all quarters, of which we shall speake more hereafter.

Thirdly, say all did, yet we can by no meanes yeeld that the *Jewes* of *Asia*, mentioned *ver.* 27, 28. were of this great multitude of beleeving *Jewes*, mentioned *ver.* 20. Seeing the Text is plaine, that they were *Persecutors* rather then *Beleevers.*

Fourthly, nay none of the beleeving *Jewes* that were among the *Gentiles*, must be included in these *Myriads*, for they are clearely distinguished from them, the words are plaine, that the *Myriads* of beleeving *Jewes* were informed that *Paul* taught all the *Jewes* among the *Gentiles*, &c. They then are informed that *Paul* had taught others. The *Jewes* among the *Gentiles* were they whom *Paul* had so taught, and how could they

they be in the number of them that were informed, had they need to be informed by others, what *Paul* had taught themſelves?

Fifthly, they therefore muſt either be the beleeving *Jewes* of *Jeruſalem* only; and then we have more then we need, or at moſt they muſt be the beleeving *Jewes* in *Judea* only, and if ſo, thence we argue, if there were τὰ σαιμυριάδες, ſo many ten thouſands of beleevers in *Judea*, there muſt be ſome ten thouſands, at leaſt, one ten thouſand in *Jeruſalem* for her part, that will make more then one Congregation, which might meet for all Ordinances in one place; if ſo many, where leſſe meanes, then a greater number proportionably muſt be in *Jeruſalem*, where the *Apoſtles* were preaching daily in the *Temple*, and from *Houſe* to *Houſe*, and that for two and twenty yeares together, and therefore it cannot but be very ſtrange, that in all that time of the Goſpels Spring in ſo populous a City, *All* of them ſhould convert no more to the Faith then might make up but one Congregation.

Sixthly, how do *Our Brethren* in the ſixth reaſon, whereby they would prove that the number of *Beleevers* in *Jeruſalem* were no more then might meet in one place, make uſe of the very next *ver.* 22. to that purpoſe, where it is ſaid, *how is it therefore? The multitude muſt needs come together*: Sure the multitude there are no other then the *Myriads* in this *ver.* 21. and we conceive *Our Brethren* then took that multitude to be of the *Church* of *Jeruſalem*, whatever they do now.

"*But if it be ſaid that nothing can be argued from the word* μυριάδες *which* "*as* μύριος *being put without addition of another word of number, ſignifieth* "*only indefinitely very many.* We anſwer, firſt, *Our Brethren* in their third exception out of *Luke* 12. 1. tranſlate this word μυριάδες *Myriads*, and there ſtretch it to the utmoſt extent, and thereby prove that one mans voice may be *heard* by *Myriads* at once, which no man can beleeve; but here they would ſhrink the ſignification of it, to be a leſſe number, when we would improve its proper ſenſe and latitude, to ſhew the exceeding great numbers of *Beleevers* in *Jeruſalem*, or in all *Judea* (for either will ſerve our turne) which they cannot deny, but might reach to ſo many.

Secondly, they found in their Book the Adjective μύριος put indefinitely, as μύριον πλήθος and ſome other ſuch like, which might have been tranſcribed, but there they found not an inſtance of the Subſtantive μυριὰς ſo uſed, elſe it would have been added: which we could have deſired might have been, or any wherein it ſignifieth fewer then ten thouſand, ſure it doth not in ſuch inſtances as we meet with *Acts* 19. 19. *Rev.* 5. 11. ἀργυρίου μυριάδας πεντὲ 5000 pieces of ſil-

'*Thirdly, they ſeeme to intimate that* μυριὰς *without the addition of a-* "*nother word of number might ſignifie fewer then ten thouſand*, as if ſuch a word added heightned its ſignification, whereas we finde in Scripture that ver.

that it stints it rather to his precise signification of 10000 and no more, as *Act.* 19. 19. but when it is alone by it self, its left free to reach to a greater numberlesse number, as in those *Myriads* of Saints, *Jude* 12. and Angels, *Heb.* 12. 22.

To their answer to the second proof of the first head from the many Apostles and other Preachers in the Church of Jerusalem, &c. Our Brethren say,

First, for the Apostles.

"*First, they took all opportunities to fill their hands with worke, Preaching* "*daily in the Temple, and from House to House, Acts* 5. 22. *&* chap. 2 26. "*Paul also in Ephesus taught publikely in the Congregation, and from house* "*house, Acts* 20. 20.

"*Secondly, when any in* Judea, *or elsewhere, were converted, the Apostles went abroad,* Chap. 8.

"*Thirdly, How were the twelve imployed, when for forty dayes together,* "*they met together in an upper roome,* & had but one hundred and twenty for a Flock?

We reply to the first Answer.

Resp. ad primum. First, because the *Apostles* tooke all opportunities to fill their hands with worke, therefore they distributed their many thousands into severall *Congregations*, that they might all be at work at once in an orderly way, otherwise though they might preach occasionally, yet they could have had no setled way, and opportunity of imploying themselves in the work of the Ministry.

Secondly, their preaching daily in the Temple, and from house to house, confirmes this; they preached in the Temple to the promiscuous multitude, whilest they had their proper Church meetings in more private houses.

Thirdly, this is yet further confirmed by what our *Brethren* say of *Paul*, who taught publikely, and from *house* to *house*: for if *Paul* could doe both these workes at *Ephesus* himself alone; why might not *Peter*, *James* and *John*, doe as much at *Jerusalem*? especially if but one Congregation: so that by this Argument the rest of the Apostles might have been spared, and yet that one Congregation sufficiently instructed.

Ad 2. To their second, of the Apostles going forth to erect other Churches, they can give but one instance of it, *Acts* the 8. where the whole twelve went not forth, but only two were sent.

Ad 3. To the third, we say first, our *Brethren* mistake forty daies for ten, at most, for no more were there from Christs Assention, (upon which they went up into that upper chamber, *Acts* 1. 13, 14.) to *Pentecost*, *Acts* 2. 1.

Secondly, as in those forty daies which they mentioned, the *Apostles* were imployed not in *Preaching*, but in *Learning* from *Jesus Christ* the things

things pertaining to the Kingdome of God, *Acts* 1. 3. ſo in thoſe ten daies which they meant, they were taken up, eſpecially in *Prayer* and *Supplication*, *Acts* 1.14. waitng for the promiſe of the Spirit, further to inable them to the work of the *Miniſtry*, and of them ſo fitted and filled with the Spirit, we meant in our Argument.

For the *many Teachers*, they ſay;

"*There were then many gifted men that were not Officers, which yet* "*occaſionally inſtructed others, as* Aquila *did* Apollos, *thoſe gifts were ſo* "*plentifull, that in that one* Church *of* Corinth, *almoſt every one of them* "*had them,* 1 Cor. 14.26. *and yet not Officers, for elſe there would have been* "*almoſt as many* Teachers *as* Members, *and the powring out of the Holy* "*Ghoſt (more ordinary then) did not make every man a* Teacher *by Office,* "*for then all thoſe in* Samaria *ſhould have been* Teachers, Acts 8.

"2. *That not any of them were in Office, becauſe we find no mention of* "Elders *in the Ordination of* Deacons, Acts 6. *in which* Elders (*had there* "*been any*) *had an intereſt, and would have been named as well as the A-* "poſtles, *as they are,* Acts 15. *When once there were* Elders, *but* Deacons "*were the firſt ſort of Officers that were choſen, and till their choice the* "Apoſtles *managed all.* As for the firſt part of their Anſwer;

1. Firſt, We grant in thoſe times were many gifted men that were not in Office, which might occaſionally inſtruct others, as *Aquila* did *Apollos*.

2. But ſecondly, We did never ſay, that *Congregations* were to be multiplied according to the number of gifted men, or that there ſhould be almoſt as many *Teachers* as *Church members*, to which *our Brethren* rather propend in the practiſe of their *Congregations*.

3. Thirdly, But this inſtructing occaſionnally, was either in private, and then its nothing to the purpoſe, or in publick, and ſo it cannot be meant, for not only *Aquila*, but alſo *Priſcilla* his wife inſtructed *Apollos*, and *our Brethren* will not ſay women may (no not occaſionally) in publick.

4. Fourthly, *Our Brethren* cannot conclude that ἕκαστος, 1 *Cor.* 14.26. ſignifieth ſimply, all, or almoſt all, but all, or every one that were ſo qualified, as *Luke* 13.5. *Doth not* ἕκαστος *every one of you looſe his Ox or his Aſſe, &c.* and 1 Cor. 7.2. *Let* ἕκαστος *every one of you have his own wife, &c.* not meant of all in generall, but of every one that had an Ox, *&c.* or had need of a wife, and ſo in that place of the *Corinths*.

Reaſ. 2. To the ſecond part of this anſwer we reply;

1. That it will not follow, becauſe Elders are not mentioned *Act.* 6. therefore then there were none; We find no mention of *Elders* in *Ieruſalem*, till *Acts* 11. will *our Brethren* therefore ſay, there were none till then? The truth is, we reade nothing at all in Scripture, of

the time or occasion of ordaining *Elders* in that Church, and therefore lesse can be said about it.

Secondly, Yet the current of Expositors say, that the seventy Disciples were at *Ierusalem* among those hundred and twenty Names, of whom we reade, *Acts* 1. who were *Teachers* by Office, and if so, then all the work of Administration of all sorts did not lie only upon the Apostles hands, as *our Brethren* affirm.

Thirdly, We have already proved, that those who were scattered from *Ierusalem*, were *Preachers* by Office before the dispersion, and *our Brethren* grant, that after the dispersion there were *Elders* there, so that both before and after the dispersion, there were many *Teachers* and Officers there, which is an argument of many *Congregations* there.

To their Reasons against the third Proof of the first head, from the diversity of Languages among the Beleevers.

VNto our third Proof of divers Congregations at *Ierusalem* by the diversity of Languages there, *Act.* 2. 6. the first Answer that our "*Brethren* make is, *That tis true indeed that there were in the second of* "Acts, *out of all Nations, that heard the Apostles speak in the severall* "*Languages of the Countries they were born in, but yet those were all ei-* "*ther* Iews *or* Proselytes Ευλαβεις *worshippers, as* ver. 5. *who came up to* "*worship, and some parts of the worship were Audible.*

1. We observe that our Brethren translate Ευλαβεις worshippers for their own advantage, not having either the Propriety of the word, the use of it in the Scripture, or the Concurrence of Interpreters to bear them out in such a translation. The advantage they seek for, is, because they would colour it the better that these Companies now assembled at *Ierusalem* came up to Worship; or as they explain it elsewhere, that they came up to Pentecost. But this follows not, because they were dwelling at *Ierusalem* at this Feast of Pentecost, that therefore they came up to this Feast, or to worship only, as we touched before.

For First, the *Iews* that dwelt without the Land of *Canaan* were not bound to appearance at the Festivalls there.

Secondly, nor was it possible that they should so do, if they had been commanded, unlesse they did nothing almost all the year but go up to *Ierusalem*, and home again, their habitation being some of them so many months Journy distant.

Thirdly, what had the dispersed *Iews* to do at the Feast of Harvest (for so it is called *Exod.* 23. 16.) when their Harvest in very many of those places where they dwelt was not yet begun?

Fourthly, if their distance from *Ierusalem* made them to choose to come

come up but to ſome one of the Feaſts, and omit the reſt, why to Pentecoſt, which was the leaſt Solemn of all the three, rather then to the Paſſeover or Tabernacles, theſe two being Solemnities for a whole week, Pentecoſt but for a day.

Fiftly, we produce a more probable reaſon before (as we ſuppoſe) of this matchleſſe and unparalell'd concourrſe at this time, for ſo we doubt not to call it, *viz.* that the *Iews* had learned by the Scripture, and eſpecially out of the Propheſie of *Daniel*, that this was the time when the Kingdom of Heaven ſhould appear, as it is apparent both out of *Luke*, *chap.* 19. *ver.* 11. and out of the *Iews* own Authors, and therefore came in thoſe multitudes to *Ieruſalem*, and there ſetled to dwell, to ſee the fulfilling of thoſe things that all the Nations ſo much looked after.

2. Although it were true, that all theſe diſperſed ones came up to worſhip, and though the worſhip in ſome parts of it were Audible, yet can it be no ſound arguing to infer thereupon, that therefore all that came to worſhip underſtood what was ſaid in it; eſpecially ſeeing that the worſhip at the Temple was not ſo much to hear, as to offer.

"They proceed thus: *And though born in other Countries (the* Iewes "*being diſperſed) yet all were generally learned and underſtood the* Hebrew "*tongue, the Language of their own Nation, even as to this day the* Iews "*and their children do.*

Firſt, that the diſperſed *Iews* were ſo generally learned, is by far, ſooner ſaid then proved; even they of *Ieruſalem* were ſcorned by the learned men there, as Ignorant in the Law, *Ioh.* 7. 49. and *Ioſephus* ſeemeth to teſtifie the clean contrary to what our *Brethren* aſſert.

We more wonder at their aſſertion concerning the *Iews* diſperſed being ſo learned, unleſſe they can ſhew us ſome Univerſities, Synagogues, Schooles, or ſome means of raiſing learning, in *Media*, *Parthia*, and other places, which we never yet have ſeen or heard of.

To what an unacquaintedneſſe with the Law, and with that learning we are now ſpeaking of, the people were grown in the ſeventy years captivity may be collected out of the book of *Nehemiah*: And how theſe diſperſed ones now in mention ſhould come to be ſo learned, when their diſperſion was ſo vaſtly wider, and the continuance of it ſo incomparably longer, we confeſſe we cannot apprehend, hiſtories do not evidence, and we ſuppoſe our *Brethren* will not be able to demonſtrate.

Secondly, by the *Hebrew* tongue we conceive our *Brethren* underſtand not the Language properly ſo called, for its ſo clear both by writings of learned men, and by the Scripture it ſelf, that that was not the vulger Language of the Nation at thoſe times that we are ſpeaking of, that we cannot once ſuſpect that they mean that tongue, but the mixed

Syriack,

Syriack, of which we have some small parcels in the New Testament, and some larger peeces in the *Iewish* writers, which indeed is called *Hebrew*, *Ioh.* 19.13,17. and the *Hebrew* Dialect, *Acts* 21.40. and *Acts* 22.2. not because it was the proper Hebrew tongue, but the proper tongue of the Hebrews at this time. *Acts* 1.19.

We are indifferent whether Language they mean, for we deny that the *Iews* born in other countries did generally understand the one or the other.

First, the Septuagint translation was the Bible they had then in common use, both in their Synagogues, and in their studies, as is apparent both by the quotations of the *Apostles*, and of *Philo*, and *Iosephus*, and is hinted by *Tertullian*.

Secondly, the Prophets were translated out of *Hebrew* into *Caldee* a little before the coming of *Christ*, and the Law a little after, to make them the more intellegible.

Thirdly, even *Philo* himself, one of the learnedest of the Nation, and one that was alive at this very time of which we are speaking, doth sometimes bewray his unskilfulnesse, if not his totall ignorance in the pure *Hebrew* tongue.

And whence then came their skilfulnesse in the *Hebrew* tongue so common and generall as *our Brethren* conceive, if they meane this Language?

Secondly, as for the *Syriack*, which was indeed the Language of the Nation at this time, we offer these things likewise.

First, that there was no part of Scripture written in that Language.

Secondly, that there was but little exposition of Scripture, or indeed none at all in that Language that did then go up and down among all *Iews* that were dispersed.

Thirdly, that it is questionable, whether the Audible parts of worship at the Temple were in this Language, or no?

Fourthly, that though it were, yet will *our Brethren* hardly ever finde a reason or argument, that might perswade all the *Iews* under heaven therefore to study, and get that *Syriack* Language, because it was spoken at *Ierusalem*.

Fifthly, there is so much difference of Language in the two Talmuds, and in the two Targums: and other Authors that were neer to this time, as may somewhat argue that all the Nation did not so generally understand that one Language all alike.

Sixthly, *Philo* himself appears to be unskilfull in it, when he translates a most common *Syriack* word, only upon other mens report.

Seventhly, though it were granted our *Brethren*, that all the men among the dispersed *Iews* understood the *Syriack*, obtaining it by study;

yet

yet how will they make it good for women, of which there were ſome ſtore of company there ?

Eighthly, eſpecially, how will they make it good of Proſelites ? for that *Romans*, *Cappadocians*, *Cretians*, or any of thoſe Nations of the weſtern diſperſion, whoſe Language had no affinity at all with the *Syrian* or Hebrew tongue, if they converted to the Hebrews Religion, ſhould alſo be skiled in the Syrian tongue, requires a ſtronger reaſon to evince, then we expect can be yet ſhewed us.

How learned the *Iews* and their children are at this day our *Brethren* mention, but we ſee no proof for it. It may be they have met with ſome that have attained to good skill in the Scriptures, and Hebrew tongue, but this is not proof for the generall. 'Tis true indeed they have their prayers & Service in their Synagogues in the Hebrew tongue, but this no more proveth that they generally underſtand Hebrew, then it argueth that the Papiſts generally underſtand Latine, becauſe they have their Latine Service: And yet alſo have we ſeen the *Iews* prayers in Spaniſh, & Italian tongues, though written indeed with the Hebrew letter.

" The Aſſertion, *That all the diſperſed* Iews *underſtood the* Hebrew " *tongue our Brethren* think *is evident* in Acts c. 20. 21. 22. *where* Paul *com-* " *ing up with divers* Grecians *to the Feaſt of Pentecoſt*, c. 20. ver. 4. *unto* " *which the* Iews *out of all quarters came, and being at a ſolemn meeting in* " *the Temple*, chap. 21. ver. 27. *the* Iews *out of* Aſia, *ſtrangers, ſtirred up* " *all the people againſt him, and when* chap. 22. ver. 2. *he made a ſpeech to* " *them, and when they heard he ſpake the* Hebrew *tongue, they kept ſilence,* " *and heard him patiently.*

Whether *Paul* were at the Feaſt of Pentecoſt mentioned in this ſtory, we refer to what we have ſaid before, and that the *Iews* out of all quarters came to that Feaſt we deny : If we ſhould grant all that *our Brethren* ſpeak in this paſſage, what doth it prove of their opinion? becauſe that *Paul* being accuſed by the *Iews* of *Aſia*, to the *Iews* of *Ieruſalem*, and aſſaulted by the *Iews* of *Ieruſalem*, when he maketh a ſpeech to them to whom he was accuſed, and by whom he was aſſaulted, in the *Hebrew* tongue, they heard him patiently, becauſe he ſpake in their own tongue ; *Ergo*, all the diſperſed *Iews* of all Countries whereſoever underſtood that tongue : It is a conſequence ſo far fetched, and ſo ſtrangely inferred, that we can rather wonder at ſuch Logick, then find any ſtrength in ſuch Argumentation. If we ſhould put them to prove that theſe *Aſian Iews* that accuſed *Paul* (to meddle with none other) underſtood his Apologie, we ſuppoſe they could give us but little ſatisfaction in it : Nay, may we not retort their inſtance and argument againſt themſelves thus ? That if the *Iews* of *Ieruſalem* took *Paul* for a *Iew* as it is moſt probable they did, they expected at firſt that he could not have

ſpoken their Language, which when they heard him do, they gave him the more attention.

A ſecond inſtance they produce, is the peoples underſtanding *Peters* Sermon *Acts chap.* 2.

"*And further* (ſay they) *thoſe mentioned,* Acts chap. 2. *did underſtand* "*all of them* Peters *Sermon: And though others ſpake unto them beſides* "Peter *in their own Language the Wonderfull things of God, yet that was* "*but a preparative ſigne to them: As firſt epiſtle to* Corinthians chap. 14. "ver. 22. *making way for their converſion,* ver. 11, 12, 13. *but the meanes* "*of their converſion was* Peters *Sermon afterwards, and it was he that* "*gave direction to them all what to do to be ſaved. And therefore it muſt* "*be ſpoken of ſome common Language they all underſtood.*

"*And thoſe gifts of Languages given to the* Apoſtles *were not of neceſſity to* "*inſtruct theſe new converts only, but to fit them when they ſhould go abroad* "*into all the world, and to be a ſign to the* Jewes *at preſent to convince them.*

We deſire a proofe, that *Peter* alone preached and converted theſe three Thouſand. It is true indeed that mention is only made of *Peters* Speech, yet doth not this in *Lukes* ſtile, nor indeed *re ipſa* exclude the preaching of the other *Apoſtles*. For

Firſt, obſerve in *Acts, chap.* 3. *ver.* 12. it is ſaid *Peter* anſwered the people, and his ſpeech is only recorded without any mention at all of *Iohns*, and yet *chap.* 4. *ver.* 1. it is ſaid Λαλούντων αὐτῶν, declaring plainly that *Iohn* ſpake as well as he; ſo againe, *chap.* 4. *ver.* 8. it is ſaid *Peter* ſpake to them, and his ſpeech only recorded, and yet in *ver.* 13. it is ſaid, they ſaw the boldneſſe of *Iohn* as well as *Peter*.

Secondly obſerve, that though *Luke* in this Book of the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles* intended to declare the growth of the Goſpel, and of the Church, by the Miniſtry of all the *Apoſtles* and *Diſciples* that had their ſhare in it, yet doth he fix more eſpecially upon the ſtorie of thoſe that were reſpectively Miniſters of the circumciſion and uncircumciſion by a more peculiar deſignation, as *Peter* and *Iohn*, more eſpecially *Peter*; *Paul* and *Barnabas*, more eſpecially *Paul*.

Thirdly, when he particularizeth ſo much concerning *Peter*, and ſo little concerning the reſt of the twelve, he doth not thereby intimate any whit leſſe zeal or activity for the propagation of the Goſpel in them, then in him, but he chooſeth rather to inſiſt upon, and follow the ſtorie of *Peter*, partly (it may be) becauſe his great fall in the deniall of his Maſter required the greater teſtimony of his recoverie, and partly or chiefly becauſe he was more ſingularly deſigned for a Miniſter of the Circumciſion, therefore is he the man moſt ſpoken of while the ſtorie followeth the Church of the Circumciſion.

Fourthly, obſerve that in *Acts, chap.* 2. *ver.* 14. it is ſaid *Peter* ſtood forth

forth with the eleven: Now if the eleven were ſilent in this action, and Auditours only as well as others, why are they mentioned?

Againe it is ſaid, *ver.*37. *They were pricked in their hearts, and ſaid to Peter, and to the reſt of the Apoſtles, What ſhall we do?* why ſhould they aske counſell of the reſt of the *Apoſtles* as well as *Peter*, if they had not preached to them as well as he? and likewiſe in *ver.*42. it is ſaid they continued in the doctrine of the *Apoſtles*, Αποστόλων in the plurall.

Fiftly, *Peter* laieth to the charge of theſe to whom he ſpeaketh, the death of *Chriſt*, now there were in that number, *Acts chap.* 2. divers Proſelites, *ver.*10. who had no hand at all in his death.

Sixtly, the pointing in *verſ.*41. is conſiderable, where it is ſaid, *Thoſe that received Peters words were baptized*, and then as ſpeaking of another ſtorie he ſaith, *There were added the ſame day three thouſand ſoules.*

All theſe things conſidered, we have good cauſe to doubt whether *Peter* alone preached at this time, and whether he alone was the converter of theſe three thouſand, and whether he alone gave them direction what to do.

Our *Brethren* conclude this paſſage thus, *Thoſe gifts of languages were not of a neceſſity to inſtruct thoſe new Converts only, but to fit them when they ſhould go abroad into all the world, and to be a ſigne to the* Jewes *at preſent to convince them.*

Whereas they ſay thoſe gifts of Languages given to the *Apoſtles* were not of neceſſity to inſtruct thoſe new converts only, we ſay ſo likewiſe; but our meaning is, that thoſe gifts were of neceſſity to inſtruct thoſe new converts, but not to inſtruct them only, but to fit the *Apoſtles* againſt they ſhould go abroad into all the world: And if our Brethren mean not ſo, let them leave out the word *only*, and we ſhall know then what to ſay to them: but here we cannot tell what to ſay to them, becauſe we cannot clearly tell what they mean.

Tis true indeed that tongues were for a ſign, and it is paſt gain-ſaying, firſt Epiſtle to *Corinthians*, *chap.* 14. *ver.*22. But that they were given for a ſigne as for the proper end, we do utterly deny it: For we know that the gift of healing and power of caſting out devills were for a ſign, but we ſuppoſe our *Brethren* will not ſay that that was the proper end why they were given: but for the benefit of the people in healing and diſpoſſeſſing. And ſince the nature of the gift doth import a neceſſity of it in the parties to whom it was applied, as healing and diſpoſſeſſing argued ſickneſſe and poſſeſſedneſſe: ſo ſince the very nature of the gift of tongues doth imply inſtruction, we cannot but apprehend a neceſſity of it in thoſe perſons to whom it was uſed: for it ſeemeth monſtrous to us that the ſolemne promiſe of the Father given in ſo glorious a manner, and ſo wondrous a thing in it ſelfe, ſhould be more for a ſigne to them

that beleeved not, then for any benefit for thoſe that did: And that that gift which had been ſo highly Propheſied of before, and ſo highly Magnified now, and ſo great a gift of the ſpirit in it ſelfe, ſhould be but for this purpoſe, to ſpeak ſtrange Languages to them that could have underſtood all of them one Language if it had been ſpoken; what a needleſſe ſuperfluity of the gifts of the ſpirit would our *Brethren* have here, who will have ſuch a thing as this only for a ſigne to the *Iewes* while the *Apoſtles* were among them? We have ever held that the gift of tongues was for the calling in of the people to the knowledge and profeſsion of God and Religion, as the confuſion of tongues had been their caſting out, and we have ever thought the gift it ſelfe to be of an inſtructive nature, and why it ſhould not be ſo to the *Iewes* here we ſee no cauſe.

The *Apoſtle* indeed ſaith in the place cited, *Tongues are for a ſigne*, but he implies alſo in the *verſe* preceding, that they were given for this end, that the people might heare; *With men of other tongues and other lips will I ſpeake unto this people*, and yet for all this will they not heare. Inſtruction was the proper end of Languages, as it is of preaching, yea though the wicked receive it not; and the Languages now given had no end at all, if the people had no need of them.

The *Apoſtles* indeed were fitted with this gift againſt they ſhould go into all the world; but let our *Brethren* conſider theſe things.

Firſt, how long it was before any of the *Gentiles* were gone and preached unto by any of the *Apoſtles*: let them looke either into the *Eccleſiaſticall* Hiſtories, or ſeriouſly examine the Text, and they ſhall finde that it was divers yeares before they preached to any but the *Iews*, and then what ſhould they have done with ſo many tongues for theſe divers yeares being to preach only to *Iews* that underſtood all of them one Language? If we ſhould put our *Brethren* to it, to prove that the *Apoſtles* were gone abroad into all the world before the Councell at *Ieruſalem*, which was at the leaſt ſeventeen yeares, or before the Apprehenſion of *Paul* at *Ieruſalem*, *Acts* 21.30. which was at leaſt two and twenty yeares after this gift, they would have much ado to prove it: and why ſhould they think that they ſhould have this gift which was thought a great and glorious one for ſo long a time (or grant the time to have been ſhorter) and never put it to any but a kinde of needleſſe uſe, not for any benefit of the people but that they might as well have been without?

Secondly, ſure it is, that *Iames* lived and died at *Ieruſalem*, and for ought that can be found, never departed from thence while he lived: now certainly he had the gift of tongues as well as the other *Apoſtles*: and to what purpoſe had he it if he were continually to preach

to

to thoſe that could have as well underſtood him in the mother tongue?

I, but ſay they, it was to be a ſign to the *Iewes* at preſent to convince them: To convince them, how? if by the things ſpoken, why thoſe might have convinced them if they had been ſpoken in the *Syrian* tongue only, which our *Brethren* ſay all the people underſtood: if by the Miracle that thoſe *Galileans* ſhould ſpeak ſo many tongues, why ſome of the people took this for ſo little a Miracle that they ſaid they were full of new wine: now therefore when the *Apoſtles* had in their hands the power of healing, caſting out devills, killing by a word, and raiſing the dead, and ſuch like ſigns as ſpake conviction by the very exerciſe of them, we cannot but hold it ſtrange to conceive that ſpeaking of divers tongues ſhould be thought to be added as a bare ſign, and for no other uſe, then what thoſe other gifts would have done abundantly without it.

Our *Brethren* to our ſecond Quotations of *Acts, chap. 6.* do make this anſwer.

"*Secondly, for the Grecian Widowes,* Acts chap. 6. *the* Helleniſts *that* "*lived among the* Jews *might well be ſuppoſed to underſtand Hebrew.*

Not to ſpend time upon this *Expreſſion (the Helleniſts that lived among the Iewes)* which to divers Learned men would appeare Barbariſme, the *Helleniſts* being conceived by them to be *Iewes* themſelves that lived among the *Greeks*, and not *Greeks* that lived among the *Iews*, as our *Brethren* ſeem to us to conceive, how well they might be ſuppoſed to underſtand Hebrew by our *Brethren* we know not; as for our ſelves, we know not any ſuch ground (that conſidered that hath been ſpoken before) as to ſuppoſe for the generality of the *Helleniſts* any ſuch thing.

"They conclude thus; *And that theſe had not ſeverall Congregations* "*from the reſt appeares by this, that the whole multitude together met and* "*choſe the Deacons; it was a joynt act: And if of differing Languages* "*wherein the one underſtood not the other, occaſioning ſuch a diſtinction of* "*Congregations* [*as the proofe would hold forth*] *how could they all have* "*agreed in one meeting on the ſame man?*

We anſwer; here are two things taken for granted by our *Brethren*, which are yet to prove; Firſt, that all the whole multitude of Beleevers in *Ieruſalem* met to chooſe the Deacons: And ſecondly, that they agreed in one meeting on the ſame man.

We might here anſwer what we have done before, that the whole multitude in Scripture ſtile doth not alwayes ſignifie all and ſingular perſons of ſuch a company, but ſometimes many of that company, and ſometimes only ſuch as were preſent at the occaſion mentioned: Yet if we ſhould take the whole multitude in the Text, in the ſenſe that our *Brethren* do, for all the thouſands of Beleevers, none excepted, yet is

the Assertion far from being proved still; for the Text indeed saith, *The twelve called all the multitude* when they propounded the matter of the choise of Deacons; but it cannot be found, that all the multitude met for their choosing, unlesse they chose them at that very instant, which is very questionable, and so is it whether they agreed in one meeting on the same man: for were it granted, that the people agreed in one tongue, yet certainly were they of severall Nations; and how so many Nations, so farre distant for habitation, should in so short a time as a Festivall season, come so acquainted one with another, and all with these Seven, as to agree in one meeting on one man, is so difficult to imagine, that we cannot yet be convinced of it: but must rather conceive, that upon the *Apostles* motioning the matter to the whole multitude (take it if you will in the largest comprehension) that they departed, and considered and consulted of the businesse, every Nation whom it concerned, among themselves, or the most Neighbouring-Nations one with another, and chose their men; and all having thus chosen, present them joyntly to their Ordination. And such choises as these of Officers in severall Companies, yet all those that are chosen, brought at last into one body, hath been and is so common, that it needeth no exemplifying.

"But in the wrapping up of all, they use our weapon against "our selves, and say, *That the Argument as well holds against the* "Presbyteriall *Association of those Congregations into one Church,* "*People and Elders, unto which, and in the Communion and Exercise* "*whereof, such Correspondencies and intercourses are needfull, as they re-* "*quire one common Language.*

Nay, it holds nothing neare so well against the Presbyteriall Association into one Church, unlesse it were true, that the Elders of the Congregation, and the common Members were alike learned. And it is no consequence at all, that because the people could not all of them understand one Sermon, nor could all joyne in the Sacrament, because they could not understand one anothers speech, that therefore the Elders could not understand one another to joyne in Government. Nor that a people that understand not one common language, may not joyne in one body under one Presbyteriall Government, as well as they may joyne in one Corporation, and in one civill Government.

The

The ſecond branch of this Argument, *That all theſe Congregations were under one Presbyteriall-Government:*

PROOFS.

1. *Proof.* 1. BEcauſe they were one Church.

To which *our Brethren* anſwer, "*Though it be one, yet* "*they not being more then could meet in one, the Argument concludes not*

Rep. 1. So then its granted to be a concluding Argument, if there were more in that one Church then could meet in one Congregation for all acts of worſhip, which whether we have not ſufficiently proved, we freely leave to thoſe who ſhall impartially weigh our former Arguments to determine.

2. Suppoſe the number of Beleevers there had been no greater then might poſſibly have met in one, how can our *Brethren* prove that they did not, for better convenience of Adminiſtrations, or ſome other ends, meet in diſtinct and ſeverall Aſſemblies? Some of the new gathered Churches in *London* are not ſo numerous, but that three or foure of them might very well meet in one Aſſembly, yea poſſibly they have met, Two Churches at a Sacrament, Three or four Churches at a Faſt or at a Lecture, though they are no more then might meet in one place.

2. *Proof.* Becauſe the Elders of that Church are mentioned.

Againſt which our *Brethren* except, "1. *That there is no mention of any* "*Elder of that Church, till after the diſperſion,* Acts 8. *and ſo the weight* "*of the Argument depends upon the proof of many Congregations after the* "*diſperſion, which the Reverend Aſſembly doth not poſſitively affirm:* "*This is the ſum of what is argumentative. 2 What follows, tends only to* "*prove, that we diſpute* in circulo, *and againſt Presbyterian Principles.*

We ſay,

1. As before, (Their repeating of Exceptions neceſſitating us to repeat Anſwers) That our not reading of Elders before the diſperſion, doth not prove that there were none before it; The order of Exiſtence is not alwayes to be gathered from the order of the Hiſtory. We finde Elders in *Jeruſalem* firſt mentioned, *Acts* 11. and after, *Acts* 15. but when they were firſt conſtituted, we finde not particularly expreſſed; only we may rationally conceive, that the Apoſtles in their care for the Churches good, did ordain Elders in that Church very early; for they knew their *Commiſſion* was not limited to *Jeruſalem*, but extended to *all Nations*, Matth. 28. 18. and though Chriſt at his departure gave them a charge to tarry at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 1. 4. yet it was but *for a time, till they received the Holy Ghoſt*, which was ſhortly after, *Acts* 2. after which time they knew not how ſoon any or all of them might have been

called

called thence to Preach the Gospel to other Nations; and therefore we cannot thinke they would have lesse care of setling Elders there, then *Paul* upon a like occasion had in the Churches of *Lystra*, *Iconium* and *Antioch*, *Acts* 14.

2. Let not our *Brethren* therefore say, *The weight of our Argument lies upon the many Congregations after the dispersion*, till they can prove that the Apostles neglected or deferred to ordain Elders untill then.

3. Yet did the weight of the Argument lie where our *Brethren* would have it, we doubt not but we have so fully proved many Congregations there after the dispersion, as it would fully carry the cause.

4. Though the Assembly did not at first so positively affirm it, it was not because they wanted proof or evidence of the thing, but because they did not judge it necessary: What was spoken to the state of that Church after the dispersion (as before we have said) was rather to remove an Objection, then to make it a further proof of our Proposition

In the rest of this Paragraph our *Brethren* are somewhat obscure and perplexed. "*They speak of the Presbytery the Proposition intends.*

If they know any other kinde of Presbytery over more Congregations then one, besides that which the Proposition intends, and which they conceive lawfull, they shall do well to hold it forth, and to distinguish of Presbyteries, which they deny, and which they grant.

As for that *Circle* which our *Brethren* would drive our Argument into, we appeal to all Logick, whether to reason thus, There were many Congregations in *Jerusalem*, and many Elders; and these Congregations were all one Church, and these Elders all of them Elders of that one Church; therefore there were many Congregations under one Presbytery, be to dispute *in circulo:* If there be any other *Circle* in what we have sent up to the Honorable Houses, or in any thing that passed the Vote of the Assembly, let them shew it.

As for that they would fasten upon our Answer to their first Argument, For the further clearing of our selves, we refer them thither, where they shall finde, that Elders have a double relation, one to the single Congregation where they are fixed, another to the severall Congregations whereto it is united. Their relation to those thus united, tieth them not to all duties of Elders to all those united Congregations (as our *Brethren* suppose in their Argument) nor all those Congregations to all duties unto them, but only to those mutuall duties for which they were united, as is more at large declared in that Answer. Which of these Relations is primary, is no whit materiall to be insisted upon to our purpose.

To

To their Reaſons againſt the third Proof of the ſecond Branch, *That the Apoſtles did the ordinary acts of Presbyters, as Presbyters, in the Church of* Jeruſalem, *&c.*

OUr *Brethren* labour much to invalidate this Proof, which were they able to do, neither ſhould their cauſe gaine, nor ours loſe much thereby, becauſe (as ſome of our *Brethren* have acknowledged) if we prove many Congregations, yet ſo as they make one Church for Government, it ſufficeth: And our *Brethren* never went about to prove, that in caſe there were many Congregations in *Ieruſalem* they had ſeverall and Independent Presbyteries, yet we doubt not, but with Gods aſſiſtance to make good this proof againſt all the Reaſons our *Brethren* bring againſt it, which are as followeth.

"1. Firſt, *they grant the Act of Miniſteriall power to be the ſame in* "*Apoſtles and Elders: but in the extent of that power (which ſay they* "*is the point in queſtion) the Apoſtles power over many Congregations* "*cannot be a pattern for Elders, becauſe the Apoſtles had power over all* "*Churches, and upon that was founded their power over many Congre-* "*gations.*

"And our *Brethren* are further pleaſed to ſay, *That Epiſcopacy may* "*as ſtrongly argue from* Titus *his being left alone to Ordain in* Crete, *that* "*one man a Biſhop may Ordain alone over many Congregagations, yea, and* "*more ſtrongly, in regard that the Office of an Evangeliſt is not ſo immedi-* "*ately from Chriſt as this of an Apoſtle, and ſo is nearer a ſucceſſion; or* "*that one Presbyter alone may govern many Congregations, becauſe one* "*Apoſtle might, as that becauſe the Apoſtles did govern thoſe many Con-* "*gregations joyntly, therefore many Presbyters, over ſeverall Congrega-* "*tions may.*

1. We accept what our *Brethren* grant, *That the Act of Miniſteriall Power is the ſame in Apoſtles and Elders,* the only difference they ſeeme to inſinuate *is in the extent:* and from thence we infer, That in all affairs tranſacted by the Apoſtles properly concerning the Church of *Jeruſalem,* they did act as Elders, becauſe in ſuch acts there was no extent of their power to many, much leſſe to all Churches.

2. Whereas they tell us, "*That the Apoſtles power over many Con-* "*gregations was founded upon their power over all Churches, and ſo cannot* "*be a pattern for the power of Elders over many:* We anſwer,

The Apoſtles power over many Congregations as one Church, to govern them all as one Church joyntly, and in common, was not founded upon their power over all Churches, but upon the union of thoſe Congregations into one Church, which union layeth a foundation for the

power of Elders governing many Congregations, and the Apostles practice in governing many Congregations joyntly as one Church, is the pattern and president of that Government, even as our *Brethren* would make the Apostles joynt governing one Congregation, to be the pattern of many Ministers governing one Congregation.

3. Our *Brethren* therefore deal not so fairly, while they say Episcopacy may draw a stronger Argument for it selfe from Apostolicall practice then Presbyterie, sure what the Apostles acted singly is not so practicable as what they did joyntly; we cannot but wonder what should move our *Brethren* to study occasions (as in these Reasonings they seeme sundry times to do) to plead the cause of Episcopacy (which they and we have covenanted to endeavour to the utmost to extirpate) at least to prefer the Bishops plea for their Usurpation, before that which the Reformed Churches bring for their Government, which they and we have covenanted to defend against the common Enemy.

"2. Secondly, (say our *Brethren*) *each of these Apostles, as he had by* "*vertue of his Apostolicall Commission the power of them all; so he had* "*a relation of Ministery unto all those supposed Congregations, and every* "*member thereof for the performance of all sorts of duties, as preaching,* "*admonishing, &c. But in the Presbyteriall Government over many Con-* "*gregations that have members and officers fixed, the severall Elders are* "*denyed to have the relation of Elders to each Congregation, but make up* "*only an Eldership in common, and therefore the Apostolicall frame is* "*not herein our pattern.*

We conceive our *Brethren* here answer themselves, while they say, that, *That relation of Ministery which the Apostles had to each of these Congregations, they had by vertue of Apostolicall Commission*, for then it prejudiceth us nothing, if ordinary Elders who have no such commission, have no such relation, and the Presbyteriall Government answers the pattern well enough, though it carry not with it those relations which the Apostles had by vertue of Apostolicall commission, which we cleare more fully thus:

1. The Apostles intended here to act so, as to be patterns to others in such things as were Acts of Ordinary Church Government, and to be performed by ordinary Church Officers, which our *Brethren* themselves acknowledge.

2. There was some kind of division of the charge for the better and more orderly, and edifying performance of the duties of preaching, watching, and other administrations, as the very nature and necessity of the thing makes evident.

3. Yet by reason of this division, they acting as ordinary Elders, were not

not bound equally to performe all duties to all their Congregations, and every member of them.

4. Notwithſtanding as they were Apoſtles they had power to preach, and admoniſh, and performe all ſorts of duties to each of theſe Congregations, as they had in all the Churches in the world.

In the next place our *Brethren* proceed to give a ſummary of the Reaſons which moved the Aſſembly to conclude, That the Apoſtles did the ordinary acts of Presbyters, as Presbyters, in the *Church* of *Jeruſalem*.

But herein they deale not fairly with us; For 1. ſome things urged in the Aſſembly, of no leſſe weight then any by them repeated, are omitted: And 2. thoſe things which in the Aſſembly were twiſted together, as one concluding Argument, are by them untwiſted, and taken in peeces, and ſo made the weaker, and leſſe convincing.

The ſumme of our Argument, as it is exhibited by them, is as followeth, *viz.* 1. That thoſe acts of Government, performed by them in that *Church*, were for the ſubſtance of them ordinary acts, ſuch as Presbyters performe, and therefore anſwerably they themſelves are in them to be conſidered as Presbyters, &c.

To which firſt peece our *Brethren* anſwer nothing; indeed they had granted the Antecedent before, and they thought not fit here to deny the conſequence. But 2. that which they firſt take hold of is, That the Apoſtles were called Elders, 1 *Pet.* 5.1. 2 *John* 1. and therefore might and did act as Elders, in ordinary acts of *Church-Government*, for a pattern to us in like adminiſtrations.

To which they anſwer, "*That the Apoſtles are called Elders virtually, not* "*formally, & only becauſe Apoſtleſhip contained all Offices in it, ſo that they* "*were Elders, but upon the ground that they were Apoſtles, and therefore* "John *in that very Epiſtle where he ſtiles himſelfe an Elder, writes Ca-* "*nonicall Scripture as an Apoſtle, which as a formall Elder he could not* "*have done; and ſurely thoſe officers which Chriſt diſtinguiſheth,* Ephes. 4. "*the ſame perſon is not formally both theſe, virtually he may.*

That the Apoſtleſhip did containe in it virtually and eminently all Church-Offices, we grant; and ſo, that the Apoſtles were Elders virtually, and poſſibly that terme, if fully explicated, would hold out as much as we deſire.

"*But*, ſay they, *they were not Elders formally.*

If they mean, they were not Elders really, we deny it; if they mean, they were not Elders only, we grant it; they were ſo Elders, as they were ſtill Apoſtles, and ſo Apoſtles, as they were yet Elders; their Elderſhip did not exclude their Apoſtleſhip, nor their Apoſtleſhip ſwallow up their Elderſhip. But if by *formally* they mean, they were not made Elders before or after they were made Apoſtles, but that being

Apostles, they might and did act as Elders (which they disprove not) that is sufficient for our Argument.

Their reason from the distinction of Offices concludes nothing, for Offices very distinct, may be formally in one and the same person, as, of King, Priest and Prophet in one Christ; *Melchisedeck* was formally a King and Priest, and *David* formally a King and Prophet.

Our *Brethren* in the further prosecution of this Reason of theirs say, "*That all which the Apostles did in the Church of* Jerusalem, *they are said* "*to act as Apostles: Their Preaching is called the Apostles Doctrine, the* "*money was brought and laid at the Apostles feet, the Deacons were brought* "*and set before the Apostles, and they laid their hands on them, yea in that* "*act of Ordination they must needs act as Apostles; for they do not only* "*ordaine the Men, but erect the Office, which none but Apostles could im-* "*mediately and at first have done, so as the same persons, in the same act,* "*must act partly as Apostles, and partly as Elders; and by what infallible* "*Rule shall we distinguish it?*

We Answer, The Scriptures related to shew that the particulars mentioned were acted by men, *Qui erant Apostoli*, who were Apostles, but not *Qua erant Apostoli exclusive*, as they were Apostles exclusively; so as they might not act them under another notion: Sure our *Brethren* upon further thoughts will not affirme it; for if the Apostles did preach, take the trust of the goods of the Church, ordain Officers *Qua Apostoli exclusivè*, will it not follow from hence, that none may do any of these things but Apostles? which we are sure our *Brethren* will never say.

As for that Ordination, *Acts 6.* we doubt not to say, that in it they did act partly as Apostles, partly as Elders, in constituting an Office in the Church which was not before, they did act their Apostolicall authority, but in ordaining into that Office men whom the Church had chosen, they did act as Presbyters; and we doubt not, but that our *Brethren* in this will concur with us: For if they will not say that the Apostles did herein act partly as Apostles, and partly as Elders, they must say they acted either only as Elders, or only as Apostles; if only as Elders, thence it will follow that all Elders have power, not onely to ordaine men, but to erect new Offices in the Church; if only as Apostles, then hence is no warrant for any Elders, so much as to ordaine men unto an Office. And certainly it is not so hard for our *Brethren* to distinguish between these two; for looke by what infallible rule they make some things in the practice of the Apostles to be, not only a patterne for Imitation, but even a proof of an Institution; and yet decline other things practised by the same Apostles, as things not only by Institution not commanded to us, but not permitted to be intimated by us; by the same

ſame Rule may they infallibly diſtinguiſh between what they acted as Apoſtles, and what as Elders.

3. The next particular our *Brethren* inſiſt on, is that Branch of the Argument, where it is ſaid, *The Apoſtles acted joyntly, and* in collegio, *over thoſe many Congregations*; To which they anſwer three things:

"1. *That they had all ſingly the ſame power, which they exerciſed* "*joyntly, and they exerciſed that power together, becauſe it fell out that* "*they were together; and it was fit that none ſhould be excluded; but* "*that they ſhould exerciſe it joyntly to give a pattern for Elderſhip is* "*not eaſy to prove: Their authority of Juriſdiction did not ariſe from,* "*nor depend upon the union of all in a body, as in an Elderſhip and Par-* "*liament it doth: One Apoſtle might have done that, which all here did;* "*Yea may it not be ſaid, that becauſe two Apoſtles ordained Elders* Acts "14. *as joyned in the ſame act, and ſo acted not as Apoſtles, but Elders,* "*that therefore two Elders aſſociated may do the like?*

We deny not, but the Apoſtles acting as Apoſtles, had power to act ſingly, what they did joyntly, and yet we ſay not only as our *Brethren*, that the Apoſtles being together, it was fit they ſhould act together, that none might be excluded; but further, that they were bound to act together, becauſe as each of them alone had the power, ſo they all had the power; and therefore it was neceſſary they ſhould act together, both for their own mutuall ſupport, as alſo that their acts might have the more authority in the Church, in reference whereto (in part) they of *Antioch* may be conceived to have ſent to the whole Colledge of Apoſtles and Elders at *Jeruſalem*, when yet *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who were with them, by their deciſive Sentences, might have ended the *Controverſie*.

"*But however its not eaſie to prove that they exerciſed their power* "*joyntly, to give a pattern to Presbytery.*

Surely as eaſie, as it is to prove, that their taking in the conſent of the people, *Acts 6.* in the choiſe of *Deacons*, was to give a pattern for the ſuffrage of people in the choiſe of Officers.

We have proved already, that there were many Congregations in *Jeruſalem*; that theſe Congregations were one Church; that the Apoſtles who were Officers governed this Church; and that they governed joyntly our *Brethren* grant: Is not here a pattern for ſeverall Congregations in a City, or vicinity, to unite into one Church; and for the Officers of thoſe Congregations to governe that Church joyntly in a Colledge of Presbytery?

"*But their power of Government did not reſult from their being* "*joyned together, as the power of a Presbytery doth; as the Parliamentary* "*power which is not the reſult of Parliament men, but as aſſembled in* "*Parliament.*

We answer, Parlimentary Power in *actu primo*, ariseth from their being chosen Knights and Burgesses, but in *actu exercito*, it depends upon their being assembled in Parliament, according to the constitutions of the Kingdom in that case; so here the authoritative power of the Apostles in *actu primo*, did arise from their office, but that power which their office giveth them, must be exercised according to the constitution of Christ; now it was the constitution and ordinance of Christ, that the Apostles when they were together, and when they could, they should exercise their power, not singly but joyntly, as a Church or Eldership, to be a pattern to others, as appears, *Mat.* 18.17,18,19. & therefore the exercise of this power did in some sort depend upon their acting jointly.

" *But then two Elders associated may govern, for* Paul *and* Barnabas *did* " *Ordain, who acted not as Apostles but as Elders, for they acted joyntly.*

What ever our Judgements be of this, certainly our *Brethren* will never deny but two Elders may govern, who say that two Elders may make a sufficient Presbytery.

2. The second thing they object against the Apostles acting as Elders when together, is, " *Because it is hard to suppose that when they* " *were all together they should act with an inferiour power to what they put* " *forth alone; if* Peter *had been alone in a new planted Church, there he* " *must have acted as an Apostle, because alone, and shall all the Apostles* " *When joyned together in one act, be conceived to fall lower in their power* " *in the formall exercise of it?*

We answer, that we do not suppose the Apostles to fall lower in their power when they acted as Elders; when our *Brethren* say, at *Jerusalem* they acted as Elders of a particular Congregation; let them deliver themselves then from the same inconvenience, and they will relieve us: if they did not fall lower in their power by acting as Elders in a particular Congregation, why should they by acting as Elders in a joynt Presbytery? we have said that their Eldership did not exclude their Apostleship, and now adde, nor did their acting as Elders deprive them of Apostolick power, nor of that Apostolick spirit which guided them even in those things wherein they acted as Elders.

3. And this may take off the edge of their third Objection, which is, " *If they acted as Elders in a Colledge, then they might miscarry as Elders* " *do, and so come under the danger of excommunication, and what power* " *was there on earth to excommunicate an Apostle?*

We deny the consequence upon the former ground, and therefore need not answer their demand, what power there was on earth, *&c.* to which yet if they desire satisfaction we refer them to M. *Parkers Tractate de Politia Ecclesiastica lib.* 3. *cap.* 12.

4. The third peece of our Argument which our *Brethren* fall upon,

is, *The Apoſtles joyning with others in their proceedings, as in the choice of Deacons,* Acts 6. *which alſo they uſed to do in other Churches.*

This ſay our *Brethren* doth not prove they acted as Elders.

"1. *Becauſe they joyned others with themſelves in acts wherein yet they* "*acted as Apoſtles, as* Paul *joyned* Sylvanus *and* Timotheus *with him, not* "*meerly in his ſalutation, but in his Epiſtle to the* Theſſ. *ſo alſo* Acts 15. "*the Apoſtles, Elders, yea, and Brethren joyned in a letter to the* "*Churches; But theſe as Apoſtles, and therefore ſo called in diſtinction* "*from the Elders, and the reſt; ſo in ordaining* Timothy, *the Presbytery* "*laid on hands, yet they as a Presbytery,* Paul *as an Apoſtle, for the Preſ-* "*bytery had no power to ordain an Evangeliſt.*

We anſwer, whereever the Apoſtles joyned others with them in acts that are to be imitated by other Church officers, ſuch a joyning of others with themſelves ſhewes, that therein they acted as Elders; and therefore that inſtance of *Sylvanus* and *Timotheus* is nothing to the purpoſe, it was a work of quite another nature then thoſe of which we are now diſputing.

Their next inſtance of *Acts* 15. may ſeem to come neerer, to which we ſhall give a full Anſwer in its proper place, only for the preſent (as before to a like Scripture, ſo here) we ſay, The Text ſheweth the Letter was writtten by men *qui erant Apoſtoli*, who were Apoſtles, but not ſimply and excluſively, *quâ Apoſtoli*, as Apoſtles.

And for the Ordination of *Timothy*, our *Brethren* muſt prove, that thoſe two Texts that ſpeak of *Pauls* laying on of hands, and of the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, ſpeak of one Ordination, and one joynt act of Impoſition of hands, and that *Timothy* was ordained an Evangeliſt, before they can make any thing of it to their purpoſe.

"*Yet*, ſecondly (ſay our *Brethren*) *the Apoſtles, where ever they came,* "*left the Elders and people to the exerciſe of that right which belonged to* "*them, although they joyned with them.*

We are herein fully of our *Brethrens* minde; only we deſire it may from hence be obſerved, That it doth not belong to the people, to ordain either Deacons or Elders, whatever it may do to chooſe; for the Apoſtles, who, where ever they came, left to the people what right belonged to them, did no where leave them to ordain. But in the next words our *Brethren* and we poſſibly may differ.

"*Their Apoſtolick authority* (ſay they) *did not lie in doing all alone,* "*for then they ſeldom or never acted as Apoſtles in the Church.*

We ſay their Apoſtolick authority did lie, partly *in doing all alone*; and ſurely our *Brethren* will not ſay, that any ordinary Church Officer might do all alone: how often, or how ſeldome they acted their Apoſtolick power, we determine not. "Their inſtance of *Pauls not excommunica-*

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"*ting the incestuous Corinthian alone,* we acknowledge: Yet certainly *Paul* by his Apostolick power, might have excommunicated him alone, as well as he did *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*. But what doth this make for them, or against us? "*Paul alone excommunicated not* (say they) "*that Corinthian, and yet as an Apostle, wrote to have it done.* What then? Had they said, *Paul* excommunicated not the Corinthian alone, but joyned with the Church in excommunicating him, and yet excommunicated him as an Apostle, this had come home to the point.

We say with them, that what the Apostles did by Apostolicall power (properly so called) should not be drawne into Example: But we deny that which they affirme, that *their Apostolicall power lay in exercising Jurisdiction over severall Churches:* No, it lay in this, that they had power to exercise Jurisdiction over all; which power no Presbytery hath, nor can challenge. And for the Proof now before us, and Scriptures by occasion thereof now under debate, they speake not of the power which the Apostles exercised over many Churches (and so by our *Brethrens* own Assertion speake not of Apostolicall power) but over one Church consisting of many Congregations; nor doth the Presbytery by warrant of this president lay claime to a Government over many Churches (as our *Brethren* insinuate) but over one Church.

"*But this* (say our *Brethren* for a conclusion) *will not help it, that they* "*exercised their Government in those Congregations, considered as one* "*Church; for if they could not as Elders, then the correlate to it, namely* "*Church, could not be considered as Presbyteriall.*

Whether the Apostles in their acts of Government could be considered as Elders, we leave to the wisdome of the Honourable Houses to judge by what hath been spoken. 1. They are called Elders. 2. They were in our *Brethrens* owne confession, virtually so, we say really and indeed. 3. They acted *in Collegio* in a joynt body, our *Brethren* say *it was fit they should so do*; nor was this any degradation of the Apostles, or diminution of their power, acting joyntly as Elders, yet they acted as Apostles. 4. They took in the consent of the Church with them, in things wherein the Church had a right of consenting; we might further adde, 5. They acted that power committed to them, *Matth.*16. and *Matth.*18. And 6. if they acted not as Elders, we can draw nothing of theirs into imitation; which last were insisted upon in the Assembly, but because not replyed to by our *Brethren* we do but touch upon: but from all these particulars we warrantably conclude, That they acted as Elders in the Church of *Jerusalem*; and argue with our *Brethren*, from the relate to the correlate. Therefore the Church of *Jerusalem* was a Presbyteriall Church.

To

To their Reaſons againſt the fourth and laſt Proof of the ſecond Branch; *viz. Elders meeting together for acts of Government*, proved by *Acts* 11. *ult. Acts* 15. 4, 6, 22. *Acts* 21. 17, 18.

OUr *Brethren* might well have ſpared all that they have ſaid againſt this clauſe in the Propoſition, *Elders meeting together for acts of Government*, ſince they themſelves do aſſert, as much as we do, that the Elders of the Church of *Jeruſalem* did meet together for acts of Government; only they ſuppoſe that that Church was no more Congregations then one; ſo thus they differ not from us concerning the truth of the attribute, but concerning the ſenſe of the ſubject of this Propoſition, The Elders of the Church of *Jeruſalem* did meet together for acts of Government; but ſince they are pleaſed to make exceptions, let us examine them,

Firſt, the Argument from *Acts* 11. *ult.* our *Brethren* conceive to be this, "*There were Elders in* Judea *that received almes, therefore the El-*"*ders of* Jeruſalem *did meet together for acts of Government:* Which is a marvellous miſtake, for our proofe was laid thus: *Acts* 11. *ult.* and *Acts* 21. 17, 18. and the verſes following, ſhall be brought to prove that clauſe in the former Propoſition, *Elders meeting together for acts of Government:* So that we did not argue from *Acts* 11. *ult.* ſingly, but joyned with *Acts* 21.

Next, had we argued from that place alone, our *Brethren* have excepted nothing which can weaken ſuch a proof. For

Whereas they ſay, *That both the perſons and the act are miſtaken, The* "*perſons, becauſe the Elders of* Jeruſalem *are not mentioned, but the El-*"*ders of* Iudea *as by comparing ver.* 29, *and* 30. *it appeares: The act,* "*becauſe receiving of almes is no act of Government.* We anſwer, the perſons and the act both are miſtaken by themſelves, not by us: For firſt, the Elders of *Judea*, are not at all mentioned, but only the diſtreſſed Brethren of *Judea*. And ſecondly, if the Elders of *Judea* had been mentioned, this had been comprehenſive of the Elders of *Jeruſalem*. Thirdly, the meſſengers of Churches abroad, and particularly of *Antioch*, were ever directed to the Apoſtles and Elders of *Jeruſalem*, when they did at all ſend into *Judea*; and as *Barnabas* was ſent from *Jeruſalem* to *Antioch*, *Acts* 11 22 and the Prophets came from *Jeruſalem* to *Antioch*, *ver.* 27. ſo it is the ſenſe of Interpreters upon *Acts* 11.30. that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ſent from thence to *Jeruſalem*; and it is the more likely, by comparing *Rom.* 15.31. yea, Fourthly,

As for the act, we suppose our *Brethren* will not deny but there was much more in it then the receiving of almes, namely the ordering and appointing how it should be best improved and disposed of; which being an act of Government, and it being denied by none that the Elders did meet together for this act; It must follow, that *Acts* 11. *ult.* doth not a little strengthen that clause in the Proposition, *Elders meeting together for acts of Government.*

The next place added for proofe of the same clause, is *Acts* 21. 17,18. and the verses following; to which our *Brethren* reply thus; "*The* "*occasion of the meeting was* Pauls *entertainment, a duty of love and re-*" *spect. Secondly, that the acts which passed were none of them Presbyteri-*" *all, only they gave advice to* Paul *for preventing a scandall.*

To this we say, First, it is more then our *Brethren* can prove, that the occasion of this meeting was only to receive *Paul*, for the Text admitteth (if not favoureth) another sense, *ver.* 18. Paul *Went in with us unto* James *and all the Elders were present*; and how do our *Brethren* know, that they were assembled upon no other occasion? especially it being said that *Paul went in to James*, it may be not knowing till he came, that all the Elders were present. Secondly, if there were no more but the mention of *Elders meeting together*, it doth abundantly prove all which we intended to prove from this place, thus, That Scripture which proves a Presbytery in *Jerusalem*, or an association of the Elders in that Church, proves, that the Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem* did meet together for acts of Government: But *Acts* 21. proves a Presbytery in *Jerusalem*, or an association of the Elders of that Church; therefore it proves that the Elders did meet together for acts of Government: The Proposition our *Brethren* will not deny, because a Presbytery cannot do their duty, but must needs neglect the work committed to them, if they do not meet together for acts of Government: Neither can they deny the Assumption, that *Acts* 21. proves a meeting of Elders in *Jerusalem*, or a Presbytery in *Jerusalem*, as *Tossanus* calls it; yea themselves take their warrant from that place, for the Presbyteries meeting apart from the Multitude, to consult and prepare matters. And Thirdly, what themselves say in this place, doth not make against us, but for us; for if the Elders of *Jerusalem* did meet together for a Salutation, did not they much more meet together for acts of Government? So that, fourthly, it is not necessary here to debate whether any Authoritative act of Government done by these Elders, then and there met together, be mentioned, *Acts* 21. 17,18. &c. It is enough for us, that this place proves, That the Elders of *Jerusalem* did sometimes meet together for acts of Government. Lastly, neither do these who have most authority, being met together, alwayes and in every thing peremptorily

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enjoyn and ordain what they would have done, but oft times conſult and adviſe only, howbeit the adviſe of Elders is not lax, but binding and reſtrictive, *verſ* 23. *Do therefore that which we ſay unto thee.*

In the next place, our *Brethren* alledge Reaſons againſt the producing of *Acts* 15. for the meeting of the Elders of *Jeruſalem* for Presbyteriall acts of Government; wherein they fight with a ſhadow; for we ſaid not Presbyteriall acts of Government, but acts of Government. "*But*, ſay our *Brethren*, *if it were a meeting of Elders for acts of Govern-*"*ment, then it was a Presbyteriall meeting for acts of Government.* This Conſequence they could not be ignorant that we deny; yet they have not ſaid one word for proofe of it, only they go about to prove, "*That* "*this meeting*, Acts 15. *was not a Presbyteriall meeting, and that Synodi-*"*call meetings differ much from Presbyteriall meetings.* Which maketh nothing againſt us, for we have conſtantly aſſerted it to be a Synodicall meeting; And if it be asked, To what end then do we adde *Acts* 15. as a Branch of the proofe of the Propoſition for Presbyteriall Government? We anſwer, 1. It was added to prove that clauſe in the Propoſition, *Elders meeting for acts of Government*; the meeting together Presbyterially being proved by other *Mediums*; as for inſtance, thus, All the ſeverall Congregations in *Jeruſalem* were one Church, *Acts* 8. 1. and 15.4. And how can many Congregations be one Politicall Miniſteriall Church, except only becauſe they are united, and aſſociated under one Presbyteriall Government? And ſecondly, If we had proved from *Acts* 15. a Presbyteriall meeting for acts of Government, the Proofe had been as ſtrong and valid as this, Here is a *Brigade*, therefore here is a *Regiment*; here is an *Univerſity*, therefore here is a *Colledge*. A meeting for Synodicall acts of Government, is no weake proof of a meeting for Presbyteriall acts of Government, unleſſe we will ſuppoſe that they who were carefull to aſſiſt other Churches, did neglect their own Churches committed to their peculiar charge, and take no care of governing them; yea *Acts* 15. 2, 4. doth moſt certainly prove a Presbyteriall Government in *Jeruſalem*, thus, Where the Apoſtles and Elders did governe, and many Congregations were by them governed, yet ſo, that all theſe Congregations were one Church, there we may certainly conclude there was a Presbyteriall Government: But in *Jeruſalem* the Apoſtles and Elders did governe, and many Congregations were by them governed, yet ſo, that all thoſe Congregations were one Church: Therefore we may certainly conclude that there was in *Jeruſalem* a Presbyteriall Government; all this is certain from *Acts* 15. except, that there were many Congregations in *Jeruſalem*, for which we refer to the former proofe.

"*But*, ſecondly, our Brethren *deny their meeting*, Acts 15. *to have*

"*been such an ordinary formall Synod, or the acts thereof to have been acts*
"*of Government, as they proceeded from those Elders; the jurisdiction of*
"*Synods reaching no further then to such Churches as have sent Commis-*
"*sioners thereunto; and to make good what they intend, they bring severall*
"*Reasons, which they have reduced to four heads or Classes.*

It is to be observed, that our *Brethren* do not simply deny that this was a Synod, or that the Decrees of it had authority; but that it was not *such a Synod*, nor the decrees of it of *such* authority; neither do they clearly expresse what they mean to conclude from these foure *Classes* of *Reasons*. For as to that Debate, Whether it be a *formall Synod*, or not, our *Brethren* might have spared it, as not being *hujus loci*, but belonging to the Votes concerning Synods, not then sent up to your Honours. But however, we shall examine their Reasons, as they have propounded them.

"*First*, say they, *We read but only of two Churches, between whom*
"*the matter was transacted, they of* Antioch *sent to them of* Jerusalem,
"*and that* Electively, *because they were the Mother-Church, from whom*
"*the Word of God came, and from whom those men that troubled them had*
"*gone forth, and had pretended to teach what they had received from them:*
"*Neither is their mention made of any Elders sent thither, either from*
"*the Churches of* Phœnice, *and* Samaria, *ver.* 3. *or from the Churches of*
"Judea: *yea it is not so much as said that the Elders that were sent from*
"Antioch, *were of the Elders of that Church.*

We answer, If a Synod of two Churches, it proves a Synod of more Churches, even of as many as shall combine, and associate Synodically; yea our *Brethren* themselves acknowledge (some of them) [*Ep. before the Keyes, &c.*] *Acts* 15, to be a warrant for the meeting of Elders out of many or all Churches, and that it is an Ordinance of Christ. Secondly, if the Church of *Jerusalem* were sent to *Electively*, by way of Reference or Arbitration, as our *Brethren* use to call it, then the Church of *Antioch* only should have been tyed by that Decree, they only having made the Reference; Besides, those who were sent from the Church of *Antioch*, ought not to have been members of that meeting (as it is certaine they were, *ver.* 12. and 22.) for they who electively refer the judging of a controversie to others, do not themselves sit as Iudges of it. Thirdly, not to stand upon the probability either of the Churches of *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, their sending of Commissioners to *Jerusalem* to make known the condition of their Churches to the Apostles and Elders, and to represent those Churches in that Assembly, whose Decrees did therefore bind them more peculiarly then other Churches; or of the Churches of *Phœnice* and *Samaria*, their sending of some along with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, to testifie their consent in a case of so great and publique concernment,

cernment, which we may rather think, then that they would fail in ſuch a point of duty, and in the improvement of ſo precious an opportunity; nor yet to ſtand upon the utter Improbability of the ſending from *Antioch* Deacons, or ſome other of the people, rather then Elders; We cannot paſſe by that Reaſon given by our *Brethren*, for ſending to *Ieruſalem* only, becauſe *from them did thoſe men go forth that troubled the Churches*: which is a miſtake; for, it is not ſaid, they came out from *Ieruſalem*, but plainly, that they came out from *Iudea*, *ver.* 1. and this ſtrengthens us, and weakens them; Thoſe Elders from whom the falſe Teachers did go forth, were members of the Synod, *ver.* 24. but the Elders from whom the falſe Teachers did go forth, were the Elders of *Iudea*, *ver.* 1. therefore the Elders of *Iudea* were members of the Synod.

We know that they who come from *Ieruſalem* come from *Iudea*, but our *Brethren* take it for granted, that they who came from *Iudea* came from *Ieruſalem*; the words alſo admit another expoſition, that this going forth was not locally, but doctrinally, as we ſhall ſhew afterwards.

2. But ſecondly, to prove that theſe Letters and Decrees were written and ſent only from the Elders of *Ieruſalem*, they alledge divers things, as *chap.* 16. 4. "*They are called the Decrees of the Apoſtles and* "*Elders in* Ieruſalem, *it being the uſuall ſtile of the new Teſtament* "*by way of diſtinction to ſay, the Church in ſuch a place, the Elders* "*in ſuch a place.* This they ſay, but they have not produced one inſtance, where the Elders in ſuch a place, is put for the Elders of ſuch a place; we rather ſuppoſe that if the Holy Ghoſt had meant, *Acts* 16.4. to ſpeak of the Elders of *Ieruſalem* only, he would have ſaid, the Elders of the Church of or in *Ieruſalem*: as *Rev.* 2.3. *The Angell of the Church in Epheſus, the Angell of the Church in Sardis, &c.* and we cannot but put our *Brethren* in minde, that themſelves would not acknowledge thoſe who were κατοικοῦντες ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ, *Acts* 2. 5. dwelling in *Ieruſalem*, to be members of that Church; yet here they will needs underſtand by τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ, the Elders of that Church only; whereas we need not ſupply ſo much as τῶν κατοικούντων, but only συνελθόντων, not dwelling at *Ieruſalem*, but met together at *Ieruſalem*, or as it is in our Bibles, *Which were at Ieruſalem.*

Secondly, they object *ver.* 4. "Paul *and* Barnabas *are ſaid to be recei-* "*ved of the Church, and Apoſtles, and Elders, namely of* Ieruſalem.

True; but that is not to the point, the Synod not being then met; yea it makes againſt themſelves; for if *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ſent only to the Elders of *Ieruſalem*, there needed no greater meeting then that mentioned *ver.* 4. whereas there was another meeting in that *Chap. ver.* 6, 22, 23, 25. which was much more full and comprehenſive.

Thirdly, "*the standing Elders of* Ierusalem, say they, *assumed to them-*
"*selves to have written those Decrees*, Acts 21.25.

So may the Ministers of *London*, who are now of this Assembly, when they are declaring by way of Discourse, what the Assembly hath concluded, say, *we have concluded*; so may the Officers of one Regiment, relating what the Army hath done, say *We have done such a thing*, nothing more ordinary then such Synedochicall speeches, the part for the whole; and that we must needs understand a Synecdoche in that place is plain, for otherwise, if the standing Elders of *Ierusalem* had meant, that they alone had written and concluded those Decrees, then they had excluded not only the Elders of other Churches, but *Paul* also and the rest of the Apostles, from whom these Decrees did proceed, as well as from the Elders of *Ierusalem*.

Fourthly, they object, *ver.*22. the *Apostles and Elders with the whole Church*, and *ver.*23. *the Apostles, Elders and Brethren*.

We will not here Debate what is meant by the whole Church and Brethren, which our *Brethren* know is controverted; but how do they prove, that by the whole Church and Brethren, are meant only those of the Church of *Ierusalem*, and not the whole multitude of those who were come from severall Churches? And if by the whole Church we shall understand the Church of *Ierusalem* only, that proves not, that by the Elders there assembled we must understand the Elders of *Ierusalem* only; however by the whole Church cannot be meant the whole *cœtus fidelium*, who were many more then could meet in one place, specially in a private house, such as the *Centuristes* think this assemby did meet in; but *Cœtus Synodicus*, that is the Apostles, Elders, and others assembled from severall Churches, such as *Titus*, in the judgement of some, and howere, *Iudas* and *Silas*, who were not fixed to an Office or Membership in the Church of *Ierusalem*, but were assistants to the Apostes in severall places, and did the Office of Evangelists; which is plain of *Silas*, *Acts* 15.40. *Acts* 16.19. *Acts* 17.4, 14, 15. *Acts* 18 5. and of *Iudas*, *Acts* 15.22. 32. so that *Iudas* and *Silas* being Members of that meeting, *Acts* 15.22. it followeth that it was a meeting not only of the Apostles, and Elders of the Church of *Ierusalem*, nay nor of the Commissioners of *Antioch* joyned with them, but of others also distinct from both these.

"*Fifthly*, they argue againe from ver.24. *certain that went out from*
"*us, and to whom We gave no such commandement, &c.*

We shall not need to help our selves in answer, 1. By telling them, that those words ἐξ ἡμῶν, *from us*, in which all the strength of their Objection lyeth, are not in sundry copies which *Camero* owneth. [*Plant. A. Mont. collat. cum Tilen.*] and maketh no lesse use of leaving them out,

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in an Anſwer, then our *Brethren* do of taking them in, in an Argument, and the taking of them in, or leaving them out, doth not alter the ſence of the place. Nor, 2. By ſaying that the Churches themſelves, which were troubled, wrote not that Epiſtle, but their officers. But reading the Text as our *Brethren* do, 3. that which we lay weight upon for a ſatisfactory Anſwer, is this, That thoſe falſe Teachers which went out from *Judea*, *verſ.* 1. might be ſaid to have gone out from all the Apoſtles, Elders, and others, from ſeverall Churches aſſembled at *Jeruſalem*, and that two wayes, 1. by a Synechdoche of the whole, put for an eminent part, which is no derogation at all to the Synod; ſure there is a better warrant for this Synechdoche, then to expound that which is ſaid of *Judea*, *verſ.* 1. to be meant of *Jeruſalem* only, as our *Brethren* before did, eſpecially conſidering that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were Members of this Aſſembly; yet we ſuppoſe our *Brethren* will not ſay, that thoſe Teachers went out from *Paul* and *Barnabas*. 2. Thoſe falſe Teachers might be ſaid to have gone forth from all Doctrinally, or by defection from the Truth, though locally they went out from *Judea* only. Divers note upon this place, [*Camerarius*, *Lorinus*, *Gorranus*,] that it may be expounded by 1 John 2. 19. *They went out from us, but were not of us*; which is meant, not of a Locall, but Doctrinall going forth, as *Beza* there obſerves.

"*Sixtly*, they ſay, *if the Elders of all thoſe Churches had been pre-*
"*ſent, there had been leſſe need to have ſent choſen men to carry the Letters,*
"*which the Elders of thoſe Churches returning might have done: And if*
"*they were ſent as Meſſengers from the Synod, why not to all the Churches*
"*as well as to* Antioch? *yea although* Paul *and* Barnabas *delivered the*
"*Decrees to all the Cities; yet this was done only accidentally (as it ſhould*
"*ſeeme) and not principally intended, nor ſent in a Mandatory-way from*
"*the Synod.*

1. It is ordinary for Synods to ſend Synodicall Epiſtles and Decrees to particular Churches, not by the Commiſſioners who came from thoſe Churches, but by choſen men, partly to expreſſe their great reſpect to the Church, and partly to take off all *Odium* from the Commiſſioners of thoſe Churches, and for making the generall conſent of the Churches the better known; which was in this caſe neceſſary, becauſe the authority of *Paul* and *Barnabas* had been queſtioned at *Antioch*, and their Doctrine excepted againſt, as not conſonant with the judgement of the Apoſtles at *Jeruſalem*.

Secondly, they ſent not to all the Churches, but to *Antioch*, becauſe the other Churches were not ſo divided and diſturbed, as *Antioch*, they apply the plaiſter where the wound was moſt dangerous.

Thirdly, Neither need we diſpute how thoſe Decrees were delivered

to

to all the Churches of the Gentiles, whether intentionally or accidentally, as our *Brethren* conjecture; the reason why they were not sent in the way of Synodicall Decree and Epistle to all the Churches, but only to the Churches of *Antioch*, *Syria* and *Cilicia*, is (as some conceive) because no other Churches of the Gentiles had Commissioners in that Synod; so that no other could be formally bound by their Decrees, other Churches of the Gentiles being bound partly *vi materiæ*, partly by the authority of *Paul* and *Barnabas* delivering those Decrees unto them, *Acts* 16. 4

3. In the third place our *Brethren* say, "*If there were any further* "*authority in those Decrees, it was from the Apostles, who had power over* "*all Churches; and although the Elders did consent and approve the De-* "*crees, yet all the authority put forth over those Churches was Apostolical;* "*neither can any Assembly of men, wanting Apostolical presence and in-* "*struction, say in such a sence, as they did,* It seemed good to the Holy "Ghost, and to us.

It is evident, that the Apostles in this busineſſe did not act as Apostles with a transcendent and infallible authority; but as Elders, in such a way as maketh that meeting a pattern for ordinary Synods: For,

1. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were sent from *Antioch* to go to *Jerusalem*, vers. 2. now one of the Reasons used by *Divines* against *Peters* Supremacy, is taken from *Acts* 8.14. where the Apostles which were at *Jerusalem*, (that is, the Colledge of Apostles) sent *Peter* and *Iohn* to *Samaria*; now he that is sent, is not greater then he that sends him: and therfore in this, *Paul* and *Barnabas* did subject themselves to the Determination of the Church of *Antioch*, which they could not have done, had they acted as Apostles, and not as Members (for that time) of the Presbytery of *Antioch*.

2. In that instance of the Synod; (as *Cartwright* saith rightly against the *Rhemists*) the Apostles were not acted by an Apostolicoll and infallible Spirit, as when they were writing Scripture; but they did state the Question and debate it from Scripture in the ordinary way, whereas we never read, that they admitted much, or any disputation, what they should write, or what they should judge of the matter, when they were writing Scripture as here they did, *vers.* 7. and having by searching the Scriptures, found *what was the good and acceptable will of God*, thereupon they say (as Doctor *Whitaker* saith any Assembly upon like assurance of Scripture warrant [*Controvers.* 3. *quest* 6.] may say) *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.*

3 Before the decisive suffrage of that meeting, there were deliberative suffrages and discourses, First, by *Peter*, then by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and after by *Iames*; and accordingly it is to be observed, that though

Peter

Peter doth cleare the point of Iuſtification by faith, and not by workes of the Law, yet he ſpeakes not to the remedy of the ſcandall of the weake *Iews*, which was well ſupplied by *Iames*, who offered a way for preventing and removing that ſcandall.

4. The Elders all along do act as authoritatively as the Apoſtles; for as the Elders were ſent to, *ver.* 2. and accordingly aſſembled, as well as the Apoſtles, *ver.* 6. ſo they did decree and write the Epiſtle as well as the Apoſtles, *ver.* 22,23. and *Acts* 16.4. they are called *the Decrees of the Apoſtles and Elders*, and *Acts* 21.25. the Elders ſay, *we have written and concluded*: from which places Proteſtant Writers prove againſt Papiſts, that Presbyters as well as Biſhops have the power of deciſive voycing in Synods, but our *Brethren* in this particular deſert all the Proteſtant *Divines*, and joyne with the Popiſh opinion, which is that the Apoſtles only had a deciſive ſuffrage in that meeting.

We come to the laſt head of their exceptions, "They ſay, *there is no* "*act of ſuch authority or Government put forth in that meeting*, Acts 15. "*which our Propoſition intendeth. For firſt, here is not ſummoning nor* "*cenſuring of thoſe diſturbers of the Church. Again the Subject matter* "*ſent, and the Judgement paſt about it, is only a Dogmaticall deciſion of* "*that Queſtion, Whether the Ceremoniall Law ſhould be obſerved: but* "*the Propoſition intends Juriſdiction, which is, when Doctrines are delive-* "*red*, Sub pœna, *under the penalty of Excommunication if not received,* "*one Miniſter alone hath a Dogmaticall authority to exhort, rebuke, &c.* "*but acts of Iuriſdiction are not his alone.*

Firſt, the Dogmaticall power of the Apoſtles and Elders met together Presbyterially or Synodically, is another thing then the Dogmaticall power of a ſingle Teacher, and our *Brethren* themſelves will acknowledge that the Dogmaticall power of the Presbytery of a ſingle Congregation is a Church-Power, and that which agreeth not to a ſingle Teacher.

Secondly, And they will alſo acknowledge that the Dogmaticall deciſion of a controverſie of Faith by a Synod, is to be received by the Churches with reverence and obligation, as an Ordinance of Chriſt.

Thirdly, There were then three great evills, which were the occaſion of that meeting together of the Apoſtles and Elders. 1. Hereſie taught, aſſerting the neceſſity of obſerving the Ceremoniall Law, and that beleevers could not be ſaved without it. 2. The ſcandall of the weake *Iewes*, and their alienation of minde from the *Gentiles*, who did neglect thoſe Ceremonies. 3. The Schiſme or στασις raiſed by thoſe who troubled the Diſciples; and accordingly there was a threefold power or authority put forth in this meeting. 1. The *Dogmatick* power confuting the Hereſie,

reſie, and vindicating the Truth. 2. The *Diatactick* power, making a practicall Canon for avoiding the ſcandall, and abſtaining from ſuch things as gave occaſion of it. 3. The *Critick* power, *ver.* 24. branding thoſe Teachers with the black mark of *Lyars*, *Subverters of Souls*, and *troublers of the Church*: Now we appeale to our *Brethren*, whether theſe be not ſuch acts, as if they were put forth by a parochiall Presbyterie upon any of the members of their own Church, would be by themſelves acknowledged to be acts of Eccleſiaſticall Government, and authority.

Fourthly, Neither was it neceſſary to make any mention of Excommunication, it being a cleare caſe in it ſelf (which we ſuppoſe our *Brethren* will not deny) that thoſe Hereticks or Schiſmaticks, who could be by no other meanes reduced, were not to be ſuffered, but to be caſt out of the Churches, *Revel.* 2.2. 14.20.

Secondly, "*Whereas thoſe Decrees are called* τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα *the* "*Decrees that were ordained*, Acts 16.4. our *Brethren* ſay, *though* δόγμα "*is uſed for an Imperiall Decree; yet but rarely, and more commonly for* "*Doctrine and Opinion, and ſo it is here uſed in oppoſition to the falſe Dog-* "*mas, or Heterodox Theſes of the falſe Teachers, as* Col. 2.20.

This is the only place which our *Brethren* cite for that ſenſe of the word, but doth it not make againſt themſelves? for δογματίζεσθε in that place is expounded by the Syriack, *Are ye judged*; in our Engliſh tranſlation, *Are ye ſubject to Ordinances*: *Eraſmus* and *Bullinger* read, *Decretis tenemeni*: *Gualther*, *Ritibus oneramini*: thoſe Ordinances were the Ceremoniall Lawes impoſed, *Touch not*, *Taſt not*, *Handle not*, *verſ.* 21. therefore Interpreters make that place paralell to *Matth.* 15.9. *In vain they do worſhip me, teaching for Doctrine the Commandements of men*, and we cannot but take notice, that whereſoever δόγμα is found in the New Teſtament, it is put for Decrees or Lawes, as *Luke* 2.1. *Acts* 17.7. it is put for *the Decrees of Caeſar*, and *Epheſ.* 2.15. *Coloſ.* 2.14. for the *Ceremoniall Lawes of Moſes*: and ſo frequently by the Septuagint in the Old Teſtament, either for *Decrees*, as *Dan.* 2.13. and 3.10.29. and 4.3. and 6.9 and 12.15.26. or for *Lawes*, as *Dan* 6.8

"*As for the other Word* κεκριμένα, they ſay, *it noteth no more but that* "*theſe Doctrinall Theſes were the joynt declared Judgement of thoſe who* "*were met together; therefore when* James *gives his Judgement, he uſeth* "*the word* κρίνω.

But they might remember the authority which is given *Uni*, is one thing, and the authority which is given *Unitati*, is another thing: If they had given us a place where the word is uſed of a whole Aſſembly; and yet noted no Authority nor Juriſdiction, that had been ſomewhat to purpoſe: *Iames* might uſe the word, to ſignifie the Judgement of Diſcretion,

Diſcretion, and the whole Aſſembly might uſe it, to ſignifie the Judgement of Authority; in ſuch a ſignification the compound is uſed in the Old Teſtament, as *Eſth.* 2. 1. ᾧ ὡς κατέκρινεν αὐτὴν, and what was decreed againſt her; ſo alſo σύγκειμα and σύγκεισις is put for a Decree, as *Dan.* 4. 14. 21. ſo that each word, δόγματα and κεκριμένα holds forth authority, much more both of them put together.

They ſay, "*Thoſe words, To lay upon you no greater burthen, if any,* "*muſt prove this Iuriſdiction.*

It is a proofe indeed, but not the only proofe.

"*But,* ſay they, *theſe words may be taken paſſively, that no other bur-* "*then be laid on you, as* Lodovic. de Dieu *hath obſerved.*

As this is contrary to the generall ſenſe of Interpreters, ſo our *Brethren* have not given ſo much as one inſtance in all the New Teſtament, where ἐπίκειμαι is uſed in a paſſive ſence, & they know that ordinarily it ſignifieth Authoritative Judgement, when uſed of an Aſſemblies Judgement, as *Iohn* 18. 31. *Acts* 24. 6. And if we ſhould take it paſſively in this place, it doth not at all helpe their cauſe; for when the Text ſhall be thus tranſlated, *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and us, that no greater burthen be laid upon you, then theſe neceſſary things:* Hence it muſt follow, that theſe things are laid upon them as Burdens, and as neceſſary, and this was done by the Synod.

"*Next,* ſay they, *if the word be taken actively, yet the laying on of a* "*burthen here intended, is but by way of Doctrine, and declaring the com-* "*mand of Chriſt,* as verſ. 10. and Matth. 23. 4. *not by vertue of an Ec-* "*cleſiaſticall authority.*

They cannot prove that the Phariſees laying on of Burthens, *Matth.* 23. 4. was but a Doctrinall declaring, it rather appeares it was an Authoritative commanding, *Matth.* 15. 9. from which place our Proteſtant Writers diſpute againſt Papiſts, concerning the binding power and authority of Eccleſiaſticall Canons; nor yet can they prove, that *the laying on of a yoke* Acts 15. 10. muſt be underſtood only Doctrinally, and not rather Authoritatively; or that thoſe who contended in the Synod, for the neceſſity of obſerving the Ceremoniall Law, to whom *Peter* directs that part of his ſpeech, did not endeavour, in their debates, to carry the Iudgement of all the Elders that way, to lay on ſuch a yoke, by their Decree, upon the neck of the Diſciples; how ever that laying on of the Burthen, and preſcribing ſome things at that time neceſſary for the avoiding of ſcandall, *verſ.* 28 is taken as well by Proteſtant as Popiſh Writers, who have diſputed for the Binding authority of Eccleſiaſticall Canons, for a foundation thereof, with this difference, That Papiſts will have their binding power to ariſe from the will and authority of the Church: and theſe Proteſtants hold that they bind only *pe-*

& propter verbum Dei, only so farre forth as they are founded upon, and warranted by the Word of God, as here the Decree of the Apostles and Elders bindeth; and is therefore called *the laying on of a burthen*; yet so, that they lay on no other burthen, but what was the will of Christ, and what the Law of Love for removing scandalls, did at that time make necessary to be imposed.

That which our *Brethren* adde, that *the Apostles and Elders did not proceed to censure these false Teachers*, hath been answered before; they did censure them in some degree, even, *cum notâ infamiæ*; and twas time enough to proceed to Excommunication, when they should be found incorrigibly pertinacious.

WHereas in the close of the proofe of the Proposition, for many Congregations to be under one Presbyteriall Government, it is asserted, That whether these Congregations be fixed or not fixed, its all one; as to the truth of the Proposition, our *Brethren* offer this reason against it.

"*Every Congregation having Elders fixed unto it, is a Church, for the* "*relation of Church and Elders is mutuall*, Acts 14. *And fixed Elders* "*have a speciall relation to that Church whereof they are Elders, so as they* "*are not related to other Congregations; but if Congregations have no* "*fixed Officers, they are not Churches according to the principles of Pres-* "*byteriall Government*; *now it makes a great difference*, say they, *as to* "*the truth of the Proposition, whether many Churches may be under the* "*government of one, or whether many Congregations, which are not* "*Churches, may be under the government of one: and that no pattern can* "*be shewed for many Churches being under the power of one, nay* "*where any one Church was under the power of another.*

We answer, 1. That a Congregation having fixed Elders, is a Church, and hath power of government in such things as concerne it selfe only if they be able: We acknowledge. 2. That Congregations having Officers, though not fixed, are not Churches, we never asserted. 3. We are not solicitous of names, if we may agree of the thing. 4. Nor did we ever hold, that divers Churches may be under the power of one Church; which is a Prelaticall not a Presbyteriall principle: it is far from our thoughts to put any one Church, though the smallest, under the power and government of another Church, though the greatest; the power of a Presbytery over particular Churches being not extrinsecall, but intrinsecall to them, and the Presbyteriall or Classicall Church, not another (as the Cathedrall was) but that whole whereof the particular Churches are the constituent parts. 5. And whereas our *Brethren* say, that Elders fixed to a Congregation, have a speciall relation to that Congregation

Congregation, ſo as they are not related to other Congregations. If by *ſo as*, they meane *Comparative* more then to others, or in a more ſpeciall and peculiar manner and meaſure then to others, we grant it: but if by *ſo as*, they meane *Excluſive*, ſo related to that Congregation, as they have or can have no relation to any other, we have abundantly ſhewed before how falſe that is.

"As for their diſcourſe of *ſuppoſing the Elders to be fixed in Jeruſa-*
"*lem, that then the Apoſtles muſt be theſe fixed Elders, which would be*
"(ſay they) *a great debaſing of the Apoſtles, to make them but as ſo ma-*
"*ny Pariſh Miniſters.*

We anſwer, 1. It follows not that if they had fixed Elders, that the Apoſtles muſt be fixed Elders, there were many other Elders beſides the Apoſtles at *Jeruſaleu*; our Brethren grant that there were other Elders after the diſperſion, and ſurely when they had them, the Church had need of them: and they thinke the Church was not then ſo numerous as it was before the diſperſion. Secondly, Suppoſe the Apoſtles had been pleaſed to divide themſelves to the ſeverall Congregations, what debaſing of them were there in this more then in our *Brethrens* own way? which opinion will ſeeme to debaſe them more, They who would argue, that ten or twelve Apoſtles divided themſelves to do the ordinary worke of Elders in eight, ten or twelve pariſhes? or they who would thus fixe ten or twelve of them to be as the ordinary Miniſters of one pariſh only?

As to all the teſt of their diſcourſe upon this point, of the ſeverall Inconveniences which (in their Judgement) will follow, upon the preparing only of worke in the leſſer Presbyteries for the greater, and the like, which tends only to diſparage the Presbyteriall government; Our *Brethren* touch not us, nor other reformed Churches, ſo far as we know; We have not yet in our Aſſembly ſet forth what all the things are which belong to the parochiall Presbytery, and what to the Claſſicall, much leſſe have we preſented any thing concerning them to this Honourable Houſe; when we take theſe things into debate, we ſhall willingly heare and weigh our *Brethrens* Advice and Judgement: And if we offer up any thing in them, as our Humble Advice to the Honourable Houſes, which in their judgement ſhall not prove agreeable to the Word of God, it will then be time enough for our *Brethren* to give their Arguments againſt it.

IN the laſt Reaſon of our *Brethren*, we obſerve, That in the ſtating of the Queſtion, they limit the Propoſition only to ſuch Congregations as have fixed Officers, of which, contracting the ſenſe of the Propoſition, we have ſpoken before.

But to follow them in their own steps, We do next observe, that they distinguish between the Presbyterie of a Congregation, and the Congregation, taking them in peeces, which they ought to have considered as *unum Complexum*, and this to make the fairer way to their *Medium* of power over power, which (before they come to their argument) they would render the more odious, by *comparing it to the Episcopall Assertion, that one Presbyter may be over another.* Which Comparison, We conceive neither true nor pertinent.

1. Not True; for the Bishops ascribed their superioritie to an higher degree, or *order, Jure divino*, distinct from that of a Presbyter: making themselves successors to the Apostles, and *Presbyters* to the 70. Disciples, and accordingly they had a new Ordination, or solemn Consecration by impositions of hands.

2. Not pertinent; for 1. In a Presbyterie, All things are done *Communi Consilio*, Whereas the Bishops did all by a personall Jurisdiction, and so his power was exclusive of the power of all other Presbyters. 2. In a Presbyterie, All who judge, are liable to be themselves judged in the same Presbyterie: Whereas the Bishops did judge only, but were not judged by their Brethren. 3. The Bishops power was altogether Extrinsicall to those Congregations which were under it: But the Presbyterie is an Aggregate made up out of their mutuall Associations into One.

To that of *Powers specifically distinct from each other:* We acknowledge the Power of the Classes to be more then Numerically distinct from that of particular Congregations: yet such a Power as is the Aggregation or Coalescencie of these severall particular powers into one; and so is not altogether another for Kinde, but only more extensive.

These things being observed upon the forme of stating the Question; We proceed to Examine the Reason produced.

They lay the ground of their Argument thus, "*Where the Scripture* "*holds forth distinct sorts in any kinde, there will be found either distinct* "*and proper names and Titles, or at least some Adjunct of difference added* "*to that which is Common or Generall, As* 1 Cor. 12. *Where Apostles,* "*Prophets, Teachers, have not only particular Names and Titles, but* "*speciall notes of distinction: First* Apostles, *secondly* Prophets; *and* Gen. "1. *where no distinction in names is given, The Sun, Moon, and Stars, are* "*all called Lights; yet there are Termes of difference added,* Greater *and* "Lesser.

To which We say, That it is True, something there must be either in the Text, or Context, or Collated with other places, which may give distinction to things distinct. But then we Answer, That we looked for such Instances as might not only give marks of distinction of things distinct,

diſtinct, But might give Notes of diſtinct ſuperioritie of one thing or perſon over another, which the ſcope of the Text, 1 *Cor.* 12. doth tend nothing towards. For though the Apoſtles were ſuperior to All, yet our *Brethren* will finde it not ſo eaſie to demonſtrate the ſuperioritie of *Prophets, Teachers,* &c. to thoſe mentioned after them. And for that other Inſtance of the Luminaries, *Gen.* 1. They are not ſo great, as that we can ſee by them any Reaſon of the conſequence, that if Luminaries be ſo diſtinguiſhed, then Presbyteries muſt be ſo too.

Secondly, it is not proved that all things that are diſtinct, agreeable unto, or warrantable by the Scripture, ſhould have diſtinct Names, Titles, Adjuncts of difference therein ſet down. Parity of Reaſon from Scripture grounds is ſufficient to give diſtinction. For we do not aſſert ſuch a formall and expreſſe mention of the Subordination of Presbyteries and Synods as our *Brethren* require, becauſe they do not *Competere* to a Church as it is a Church, but only to the well being of it, in ſuch or ſuch times, places and conditions; for ſometimes particular Congregations may want a competent number of Officers, and of men fit for Government, and ſo cannot have a particular Presbyterie: And ſometimes, as in times of perſecution, ſeverall Churches may be ſo diſperſed, or may otherwiſe live at ſuch diſtance from one another, as that they may be diſabled to Aſſociate into a Claſſicall Presbyterie.

This ground being laid by our *Brethren*, They thus inforce it, "*There* "*is no diſtinction of Presbyteries by any Name or Title; For in the New* "*Teſtament the word* πρεσβυτέριον *is but in three places, whereof there is but* "*one which holds out the Government in hand, and in that place we have* "*the naked word only, without the addition of any ſuch expreſſion,* Greater, "Leſſer, Superior, Inferior, *or any kind of adjunct that can poſſibly put a* "*thought into us of more Presbyteries then one.*

To this we anſwer, 1. How can it be proved, that by *Presbyterie* in that one place is meant the Presbyterie of a particular Congregation? And if that cannot be proved, how then can the Presbyterie of a particular Congregation be proved?

2. We do not by that word in that one place uſed, go about to prove diſtinct ſorts of Presbyteries, but we ſay diſtinct Presbyteries may be called by that generall name, as every diſtinct ſpecies of *Animal*, may be called *Animal*.

3. As the word πρεσβυτέριον ſignifying a Court amongſt the *Iews*, was in Scripture Language the ſame with πρεσβυτέροι in *Conſeſſu*, or in *Synedrio*, as is moſt manifeſt; So the ſame word in the Chriſtian Church, is no other then *Presbyteri in conſeſſu*, and then we have it above once in the New Teſtament, as to the Government in hand.

4. The ſeverall Iudicatories amongſt the *Iews*, which were as much and

and more distinguished then our Presbyteries, had one and the same name, as *Gnedah, Cahal, Zekenim, Shophtim*, promiscuously given to them all, as the learned have observed [*Bertram de Polit. Iudaic. c. 6. 9.*] and the like may be affirmed of συναγωγὴ, ἐκκλησία, and other like. So *Synedrium* is a common name unto different Courts subordinate to each other. And it is further observed by the Learned, that the *Iews* had the great *Sanedrim*, and two others besides that in *Ierusalem*, and every great City twenty three Elders, and every of these Courts is called *Hagnedah*.

Selden.

5. Our *Brethren* know, that the thing was in the Church before the Apostle made mention of it by this name; for he did not in this place institute a Presbytery: And if he had not here called it so, and the word could no where have been found, yet the thing it self was and would have been in being, as our two distinct Sacraments are, though that name be not there found.

6. Our *Brethren* do acknowledge, *That the Elders of divers Congregations met together to determine, or Dogmatically declare, matters of faith are the Ordinance of Christ*: And yet our *Brethren* do not any where read God hath set in his Church, First, Presbyteries, then Synods. We see no Reason, why a Court of Iudicatorie, might not as well be without a Scripture name, as an Ordinance of Christ is by their own confession.

And therefore we conclude this *Nominall medium* with our *Brethren* thus; That as in *Scotland* and *France*, and in the Episcopall Republike, there are particular distinct names for the distinct sorts or kinds of Administration in their Ordinances for Government; So shall we also use distinct names for them, as well as they; Only we conceive, the Episcopall Republike need not have been named with *Scotland* and the *French*, but that they were pleased to serve us with variety.

Our *Brethren* say, "That as the Scriptures hold forth nothing in any "*name or title to distinguish, No more can we therein discover any sorts of* "*Government different in nature; for do you reade* (say they) *any where,* "*God hath set in his Church, First Presbyteries, secondly Classes, then* "*Consistories, &c?*

To this we answer, 1. That this is but Recurring to disprove difference in nature, because there is no difference in name, and so is all one *Medium* with the former.

2. They seem to allude to that place, 1 *Cor.* 12. first, *Apostles*, secondly, *Prophets*, which is not meant of superioritie in Government, nor is the Church spoken of there, any other then the Church Generall, and not in one Kingdom or Nation.

3. It is not necessary, that every Aggregation of Presbyters for Government

vernment of the Church ſhould have diſtinct names ſet down in Scripture: What name in Scripture have thoſe Presbyters that meet dogmatically to determine Caſes and Points of Faith? *yet they have power, and are the Ordinances of Chriſt*, ſay they. Scripture ſets not things down as Arts do, by Artificiall definitions or diſtributions; there are no Logicall or Syſtematicall methods. It ſayes not, Faith is dogmaticall and juſtifying, The Church Generall and particular, &c. and yet the things themſelves have a being in Scripture.

Now to the particulars of this *Medium*, It is firſt ſaid, They have the ſame materials, and therefore are not in that reſpect different. This militates as well againſt Courts Civill, where the members are the ſame, as againſt Eccleſiaſticall; And we Anſwer them by their own words,

Although this ſuperior Presbyterie be made up of Presbyters but as Commiſſioners from the congregational or parochial Presbyteries, yet that hinders not at all, but that they may be Offices diſtinct. And to the Illuſtration they give there, we adde, That the Officers of ſeverall Regiments, ſitting in a Counſell of Warre; The Heads of Colledges ſitting in Conſiſtory; the Aldermen of Wards ſitting in Councel, are materially the ſame; yet the Courts thus made up, are not the ſame in power with that which theſe perſons have in their particular places of Command.

2 We further anſwer, that the matter of a particular Presbyterie is, Presbyteries of one Congregation alone, reſpectively, to that alone: But the matter of a *Claſſicall Presbyterie*, are the the Presbyters of ſeverall Congregations reſpectively unto ſeverall Congregations: Even as the materiall of a Nationall Synod is not ſimple Commiſſioners, but Commiſſioners ſent from all the Churches of a Nation.

3. Where it is ſaid, *That Presbyteration alone doth ſufficiently qualifie a gifted perſon to be the matter of any Presbyterie:* VVe anſwer, That this is not true, without diſtinguiſhing of *materia Remota*, which makes a man only capable of ſuch a Relation; and *materia Proxima*, whereby a man is actually in ſuch, or ſuch a relation; for unto this, beſides *Presbyteration*, there is required a ſpeciall Call reſpectively to thoſe Presbyteries, wherein a man acteth as a Presbyter.

4 Whereas they ſay, "*That a greater number of Presbyters in the one Preſ-*
" *byterie alters not the State in reſpect of the matter*, We grant it; But it makes as much againſt diſtinctiō of Civil Judicatures as of Eccleſiaſticall.

2. For the *Formale*, the uniting of theſe perſons into a *Conſeſſus* or *Cœtus*, They ſay, *That this is the ſame, becauſe a Paſtor joyned to a particular Congregation is* Eo nomine, *a member of the Claſſis to which that Congregation belongs*. To this we anſwer, That union of perſons into a *Conſeſſus*, is but *Forma Generica* to all Presbyteries or Courts, made up by aggregation of more members, and ſo it gives no ſpeciall difference between Presbyterie and Presbyterie. VVe cannot but wonder at ſuch

a consequence, That if divers Courts do agree in this genericall form of Union and Coalition, therefore they are not distinct in form; for there is a speciall form or reason of their Union, which diversifies them; for the Pastor is united unto other ruling Officers in a single Congregation respectively to that Congregation alone: And he is united to other Pastors and Officers of divers Congregations by Association respectively to all these Congregations; which respects are formerly distinct from one another.

And for that the *Brethren* say, *The Presbyters of a Parochiall Presbyterie, are as neerly united or more, as in the choise and call of the same Congregation, and in the work of the Ministry.* That rather argues the union to be distinct, and the Presbyteries consequently to be distinct. As the Master of a Colledge hath a neerer Relation to it in the call of the Colledge, work of Governing, admitting Schollers, disposing of Revenues, &c. And yet being met in a *Consessus* of heads, for common Government over the whole University, doth concur to the making up of a distinct Court from that in the Colledge: So is it here. The speciall Reason of *Union* of the same person with both making the distinction.

And whereas it is said, *That a Presbyter by having Pastorall charge in such division, is* Eo nomine *member of such a Classis*; granting it to be so, that would nothing hinder the Classicall Presbyterie to be distinct from a Parochiall, no more then a Master of a Colledge being *Eo nomine*, a member of the Consistory doth prove, that the Government of the Colledge and of the University are not distinct; or that every particular Judge of the Kings Bench, common Pleas, and Exchequer, being *Eo nomine* of power to argue and judge cases, as it were *in Collegio*, in the Chequer Chamber, would prove that the Iudgement in the Chequer Chamber, and that in any of the other Courts were not distinct or different.

So then, to the *ultimate form* and constitution of a politicall body, there is more requisite then the common uniting of the Members thereof, *in Consessum*; for though the persons should be the same, and the manner of union the same, yet if those persons so united have in one capacity some ends and objects, and in another others, diversity of these will diversifie their meetings, even as different ends and objects do make the same person being united to the same Congregation, to be a Pastor in one sence for works of Ministry; and a Ruler in another for works of Government: and a Member in a third, for Communion in worship, and yet Ministry, Iurisdiction, and Membership in the same person are things specifically distinct, though he have both the one and the other by vertue of his union unto that particular Congregation. And that such diversity is sufficient, to make a formall difference in matters politicall, wherein specificall diversity may arise from such Reasons

as

as in naturall things do not vary the ſpecies, our *Brethren* have informed us in this paper of theirs.

Now *Claſſicall Presbyteries* have different objects, namely things of common concernment, and different Ends, as will appeare in the Anſwer to the next Branch: And this is therefore ſufficient formally to difference them from other Presbyteries.

3. *Nor*, ſay the Brethren, *do we finde any thing in Scriptures making "them as from different Imployments and Functions to differ.*

1. We affirme, and ſo it is in the Propoſition, "*The one is ſuperiour, "the other inferiour: But how can you ſay, the Scriptures have made this dif-"ference, when there is not a word ſpoken that way in any place?* The ſence of their Argument lies thus, If we do not find any thing in Scripture, how can *you* ſay it? To which we anſwer, *We* can ſay it, though *they* do not find it; As they can ſay, *That particular Congregations are independent on any Church-Power ſuperior to them*, though *We* do not find that there is a word ſpoken this way in any place of Scripture. And as to the Inſtances alledged out of ſome Presbyteriall writers themſelves, whereby they ſeeme utterly to take away ſuch difference of ſuperiour and inferiour Presbyteries; becauſe in one place you ſhall read, *The Claſſis can do nothing, Renitente Eccleſia, but it is nul and invalid, Aſſertion of Diſci-pline:* And in another, *the Congregation, though but* Minima Eccleſiola, *may Reform*, that is, ſuſpend, excommunicate, &c. *Renitentibus Corre-ſpondentiis, Voetius in his Theſes, & deſperata cauſa papatus*; and that according to theſe expreſſions, it is hard to be ſaid, which of theſe Presbyteries hath the greater or ſuperior power.

We Anſwer, 1. That the Renitencie of ſuch as are of the *Quorum*, and have power of a Negative voice to the reſt in any *Conſeſſus*, doth indeed Null and make voide the Act of the reſt: But the Renitencie of them that are not neceſſarily concurrent to paſſe an Act of power, is no derogation to the power it ſelfe, but may give occaſion to the go-vernours in prudence to forbeare the execution of ſuch Act or Sentence: As the Councell of Warre ſhould in wiſdome ſuſpend the execution of any Order which may endanger mutiny in the Army: But ſuch Reni-tencie of people to their governours doth not Null the power; for then they may at pleaſure by Renitencie to whatſoever they diſlike, Null the power that is over them. And upon this ground, we affirme that the meaſure or degree of power is not to be eſtimated by Renitency, or Non-Renitencie of them that are ſubject to it: For the Renitencie of ſubjects to a power over them, is either Renitencie of contradiction to that power, or of Appeale from it to an higher, and neither ſort Nulls the power; ſo that the Caſe alledged by our *Brethren* is juſtly thus: The Court of war ſhould not in wiſdom exerciſe an Act of power unto which the Officers and Souldiers of a Regiment are Renitent: But the Offi-

cers and Regiment may reforme themſelves, though the Councell of Warre be Renitent: Therefore it is hard to ſay, whether the Councell of Warre or that Regiment have the greater power. What ever they ſhall Anſwer to this Inſtance, will Anſwer theirs.

2. The Authors which they Cite are cleare. The Aſſertion doth aſſert, *That the Claſſis ſhould not proceed unto Excommunication, Renitente Eccleſia*; But doth not ſay that ſuch Renitencie anuls the power: and gives the reaſon, becauſe ſuch Excommunication would want its due effect, becauſe the Renitent Congregation would not caſt out a perſon out of their *Communion*, which the *Claſſis* had diſcerned to be caſt out. And as for *Voetius*, he doth plainly aſſert power in a *Claſſis* to receive Appeales from a particular Congregation, and to judge of them. The words which our *Brethren* point us unto, *Theſ.* 5. 8. 9. are theſe, *Ceſſantibus, aut male rem agentibus Correſpondentiis Claſſicis aut Synodicis, in caſu neceſſitatis (quæ ordinariam legem ſæpe non ſert) Licet Eccleſiis poteſtatem ſuam reſumere, & recte uſurpare, ſi non cum correſpondentiâ cum aliis completâ, ſaltem incompletâ, nunquam enim cauſâ Dei deſerenda eſt. Imo quidni etiam uni Eccleſiolæ vel minimæ liceat ſuæ ſuorumq́, ſaluti conſulere, & omnibus correſpondentiis renitentibus eam præferre? Cum hic teneat illud; charitas & Reformatio incipit à ſeipſo.* If there be any thing here, which may make it hard to be ſaid, which of theſe Presbyteries have the greater or ſuperior power, let them ſhew it that can, and will make the reverend Author contradictory to himſelfe, and to the Title of his Booke, *De unione Eccleſiarum, earumq́, Regimine in Claſſibus & Synodis.* Surely he giveth no more here to a Congregation, then he doth elſewhere to a particular member in a particular Congregation, *Sect.* 3. and yet it is eaſie to affirme. That a particular Congregation hath more power then any Member of it.

"2. Our *Brethren* proceed in their Argument thus, "*The worke of a* "*Presbyterie is to ordaine, excommunicate, ſuſpend, admit members, ap-* "*point times for worſhip, and the like. The Claſſicall reſerve Ordination* "*and Excommunication to themſelves; but the other are left to the Paro-* "*chial Presbyterie Thus ſome Presbyterians divide the work, others poſſibly* "*otherwiſe. But how can we affirme any ſuch deſignement from the Scrip-* "*tures, if you have not two ſorts, either in name, or nature to be found there?* "*And none of theſe Acts but may be done by that one; which doubtleſſe* "*they may: ſeeing Ordination ſeemeth to be ſpecified in the Text, If* "*the greater, then doubtleſſe the leſſer: The Paſtour in one place is ſaid to* "*exhort, in another to comfort, in another to viſite the ſicke. This will not* "*warrant diſtinct ſorts of Paſtours, for there being but one ſort ſpoken of* "*in Scriptures, we muſt interpret all theſe ſeverall Adminiſtrations to* "*belong unto that one.*

To this we anſwer,

1. That

1. That the Argument is *Circular*, for they prove there are not two ſorts of Presbyteries, becauſe not different imployments belonging to them: And now they prove, that there are not different imployments, becauſe we have not two ſorts of Presbyteries in name and nature, to be found in Scripture, to whom theſe imployments ſhould belong.

2. There is no ſuch diviſion of the worke of Presbyteries yet determined, nor in ſome part yet debated in this Aſſembly.

3. Admitting that all theſe acts here mentioned, ought to be done in a Parochiall Presbyterie, *Quoad ſpeciem Actus*, yet it followes not, but that there may be a ſuperiour Presbyterie; for if there be a Presbyterie, which hath power to Order, Correct, or Direct this power of a particular Presbyterie, Then, by the confeſſion of our *Brethren, there is a diſtinct Presbyterie.* As ſuppoſe an Inferiour Court have power to impoſe Fines, Impriſon, put to death: The Court to which appeale is made, can do no more; and yet it is Superiour, becauſe it hath power to Correct, Order, and Direct thoſe acts of the Inferiour.

4. Our *Brethrens* Argument doth proceed upon an inſufficient Enumeration of imployments, for that there are many imployments, proper to another ſort of Presbyterie, diſtinct from that which is Parochial, we ſhew by a more full Enumeration of particulars, as 1. In matters of common concernment to more Churches then one. 2. In caſe of an Incompetent Presbyterie Parochiall. 3. In caſe of Appellation and preſumed-male-adminiſtration. 4. In caſe of diviſions ariſing in particular Churches and Presbyteries. 5. In caſe of differences betweene Neighbour Churches. 6. In caſe of Sects and Hereſies ſpreading abroad, and endangering the peace of the Church, and Truth of God. 7. In caſe of obſtinacy, when the Major part of a Congregation erring, refuſe to put the differences amongſt them to Reference or Arbitration. 8. In caſe of Examination of a Miniſters Learning in Tongues, Arts, Theologie, and other things requiſite to make him a fit Paſtour or Teacher for ſuch a particular Congregation, according to the Rules of Ordination already eſtabliſhed. 9. In caſe the people, or any of them, reject or ſlieght the admonition or cenſures of their Paſtour and Officers. 10. In caſe the Paſtour be like ſome *Diotrephes*, tyrannicall and vexatious to the people, and they not able to helpe themſelves, or do ſubtilly deliver and ſpread amongſt them erroneous Doctrin. 11. When the Preſbyterie and people are divided into equall, or almoſt equall parts. 12. When hard and difficult caſes are to be dicided. 13. When ſome powerfull adverſaries or perſecutors, are to be reſiſted *Spirituali armaturâ*. 14. To prevent partiality or neglect of cenſures towards ſome offenders, ſuch as was in *Corinth*: towards the inceſtuous perſon. 15. In caſe of the Excommunication or Depoſition of a Paſtor.

In these cases, saith *Voetius*, *Non puto aliquem negaturum quin Salubris sit Autoritas multarum Ecclesiarum, uno animo, unis Consiliis conjunctarum; quid ni necessaria.*

5. When it is said, *That Ordination seemes to be done by a particular Presbyterie, and therefore all other things may be done there too.*

1. For the Antecedent, it is *gratis dictum*, and being granted, the consequence is denied: Neither doth the degree of greater or lesser make any proofe of it; for to preach the word, and administer Sacraments, are as great works, as to Excommunicate, yet it doth not follow, because a Minister may do those alone, therefore he may do this alone too.

And besides, It is also *gratis dictum*, to say that Ordination is the greatest worke belonging to Presbyterie; especially for our *Brethren* to say so: who sometimes thinke it not all requisite, and when it is, make it only a solemne admitting him into his place.

Surely our *Brethren* looke upon the delivering of a man unto Satan as a worke of an higher nature.

As for that which our *Brethren* say: "*It was not found so easie in this* "*Assembly to finde two sorts of Elders, Teaching and Ruling; though the* "*Scripture in some places speake so plaine of them, as if of purpose to distin-* "*guish them. And therefore it must needs be more difficult to finde out* "*two sorts of Presbyteries.*

We answer,

1. That it is no right way of Argumentation to dispute from the difficulty of finding a thing to the denying of it. Many points in Divinity are of difficult discovery, and yet not to be denied.

2. As it seemes to have beene easie and cleare in the apprehensions of our *Brethren*; That there are severall sorts of Presbyters, though they say it was a difficulty to the Assembly, so they may be pleased to allow the same cleareneſſe of apprehension to the Assembly in the point of Presbyteries, though it seeme difficult to themselves.

3. If the Assembly found it hard to finde out that which is plaine in Scripture, Then the paines of the Assembly in discussing and searching the Scriptures, argues not Inevidence of the thing it selfe, but their care to finde a good Foundation of that advice they should give to the Honourable Houses, and their care to satisfie if it were possible their dissenting *Brethren*.

4. The consequence which they inferre is denied, *That it must be more difficult to finde out two sorts of Presbyteries*; For admitting there were but one sort of Presbyters, yet it is easie to compound of them two sorts of Presbyteries, as easie as it is of Justices of the Peace, Heads of Colledges, Aldermen, Burgesses, to forme distinct meetings in regard of

of power, and the adminiſtration thereof, which is confeſſed by the *Brethren* in their inſtances of Burgeſſes of Cities and Townes Corporate, ſent up unto, and ſitting in Parliament.

And whereas they ſay, *That it is generally granted by Presbyterians themſelves that for above fifty yeares after Chriſt, and in the Apoſtles times, there was but one kinde of Presbyterie:* We deſire our *Brethren* to tell us, what ſort of Presbyterie that was, Parochiall or Claſſicall, as we now call them. If Parochiall, who are theſe Presbyterians that ſo grant? If Claſſicall (which they know thoſe Presbyterians meane, who from undoubted antiquity averre, that the Church was governed, *Communi Conſilio Presbyterorum*) then it helps them not at all, for if the *Brethren* grant parochiall, and the Presbyterians grant claſſicall, then there are two diſtinct ſorts by grant on this part, and on that. However the Rules and Reaſons which the Presbyterians go upon, were as valid in theſe former times as now.

To the Inference made from the wiſdome of States to the wiſdome of Chriſt, in clearely bounding out the Judicatories of his Church, we ſhall not go one ſyllable leſſe in our attributions to *Jeſus Chriſt* then our *Brethren*. But though unwilling to make ſuch compariſon of things, which are of no degree of compariſon, we anſwer to that which is Argumentative in this Rhetorique; If the light of nature have directed all States to appoint ſuperior Courts for relieving of men in caſe of Appeales from the miſcarriages of inferior: we apprehend it no leſſe wiſdome in Chriſt, to appoint or warrant ſuch authority in his Church, as may relieve wrongs through miſtakings or miſcarriages of inferior Presbyteries; For otherwiſe the Eccleſiaſticall Republick were in worſe caſe then the Civill, which confeſſedly doth afford reliefe of wrongs about inferior Claimes.

2. What is it that the *Brethren* would aſſume? Is it that Chriſt hath ſet ſuch bounds of Church Judicatures for reliefe of wronged perſons? Then they grant the Queſtion. Or hath he ſet no ſuch? Then, how do they vindicate his wiſdome!

And whereas it is ſaid, that *Controverſies and claſhings about theſe high and publike Intereſts, are no other in the iſſue, then the dividing of a Kingdome within it ſelfe* (thereby haply intimating ſome formidableneſſe of the Government to the Civil State:) That this Obſervation of theirs is true, we have too ſad experience. But that a Presbyterie over a Presbyterie doth thus divide a Kingdome within it ſelfe, the experience of all the Reformed Churches where this Government hath obtained, doth plainely witneſſe the contrary.

3. We ſhall not eaſily grant what our *Brethren* inſinuate, *That matters of Practiſe and Duty, ſhould rather have Obſcurity in the Rule, then Authority*

Authority and Jurisdiction; since the former being matters of Faith, VVorship and Obedience, do more immediately relate unto Salvation it selfe; the other, though it be subservient thereunto, yet in an inferior and remoter degree.

Neither are we inforced out of one word, but once used, to raise up so many Thrones (as they call them) or Formes of Government; For the Forme of Government is but *One*; and for the warrantableness thereof, we have shewed it out of other places of Scripture, not so much as mentioning this to prove our Proposition, which our *Brethren* so much insist upon.

And lastly, we cannot but wonder, That all the Churches of Christ, untill this present Age, should never before have discovered this frame of Government, by our *Brethren* contended for, as so cleare and evident; Especially considering, that the Nature of man is very inclinable, to search out diligently, and easily to assert such wayes of Liberty, whereby they may be Independent upon superiour Authority and Jurisdiction over them.

Cornelius Burges, Prolocutor *pro tempore*.
John White, Assessor.
Henry Robroughe, Scriba.
Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

FINIS.

REASONS againſt, and ANSWERS to the PROOFES from, the INSTANCE of the *Church* of *Epheſus*, Alledged by the Reverend *Aſſembly*, to prove,

That *The Scripture holds forth, That many Congregations may be under one* Presbyteriall Government.

THE ARGUMENT of the Reverend *Aſſembly* from the Church of *Epheſus*, is laid downe in theſe *three Propoſitions:*

"Firſt, *The multitude of Beleevers did make more Congregations than* "*one in Epheſus.*

"Secondly, *There were many Elders over thoſe many Congregations, as* "*over one flock.*

"Thirdly, *Thoſe ſeverall Congregations were one Church, and under one* "*Presbyteriall Government.*

THE PROOFES brought by the Reverend *Aſſembly* to prove the *firſt Propoſition, viz.* That the multitude of Beleevers did make more Congregations then one, in *Epheſus*, are theſe:

"Act. 20. 31. *Where there is mention made of Pauls continuance at E-* "*pheſus preaching for the ſpace of three years.*

"Act. 19. 18, 19, 20. *Where the ſpeciall effect of the word is mentioned,* "*viz. Many that beleeved came and confeſſed their deeds, many alſo of them* "*which uſed curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them be-* "*fore all men, and they counted the price of them, and they found it to be fifty* "*thouſand pieces of ſilver, ſo mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.*

"Act. 19. 10, 17. where mention is made of *Jews* and *Greeks.*

"1 Cor. 16. 8, 9. where a reaſon is given of *Pauls* ſtay at *Epheſus* un-"till *Pentecoſt, viz.* becauſe *a great and effectuall doore was opened.*

"1 Cor. 16. 19. where there is mention of *a particular Church in the* "*houſe of Aquila and Priſcilla, who were then at Epheſus, as appeares* Act. 18. 19. 24. 26.

To theſe *Proofes*, the ANSWER is,

FIrſt, as for ſuch of them which are brought to prove the *number* of Beleevers in *Epheſus*, the *conſequence* is denyed, Becauſe that notwithſtanding what is ſaid of the *Apoſtles being three years at Epheſus, and a great and effectuall doore was opened, and ſo mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed, &c.* it followes not that the *Converts* in *Epheſus* were ſo many as could not meet in one place. For

First, Suppoſe it be granted there were two or three thouſand (though there is no ſufficient ground to ſay there were neere ſo many) yet they *all might meet in one place*; and yet this were enough to ſhew that there was a large and *effectuall doore opened* to the Apoſtle, and a comfortable fruit of his *ſo long* ſtay and preaching there.

Secondly, becauſe this efficacy of the word preached by *Paul*, hath reference not only to *Epheſus*, but alſo to *all Aſia*, *Acts* 19. 26. *not* ONLY *in Epheſus, but throughout* ALL ASIA; *this Paul hath perſwaded and turned away much people.* And where he ſaith, *Acts* 20. 30. for the *ſpace of three years he ceaſed not to warne every one night and day with tears:* The words are *not* to be *reſtrained* to his being at *Epheſus*; but to be underſtood of his being in *Aſia*, as appears by Verſe 18. *Ye know from the firſt day that I came* INTO ASIA, *after what manner I have been with you at all* SEASONS, *ſerving the Lord with all humility of minde, and with many teares.*

Secondly, as for *the price of the bookes of the converts.*

The *Anſwer* is, That when there was no printing, a few mens books, yea, a few books of ſo curious and gainfull art, might well be worth that mony. For, that fifty thouſand pieces of ſilver, *Calvin* upon the place, computes to be *but nine thouſand pound French*, which is *ſix hundred ſeventy five pound ſterling*, or there abouts, at eighteen pence the frank. *Beza* reckons it leſſe, *viz.* eight thouſand ſeven hundred pound french: and our own Country-man *Brerewood* in his firſt Chap. *de nummis*, interpreting this very place; accounts every ἀργύριον at 7.d. ob. according to which rate, the ſumme amounts to about 1406 l. *ſterling*. Some one mans ſtudy now of common bookes, though not Manuſcripts, as they were, is worth as much; and how can this argue ſuch a multitude of beleevers, or ſeverall Congregations, *as could not meet in one place*, we cannot ſee.

Thirdly, as for the *Church* in *Aquilas houſe* which is ſuppoſed by the Rev-

Reverend Aſſembly to be *a Congregation* diſtinct from the *Epheſians*, and *therefore* more Congregations than one making *that* one *Epheſine Church*, ſo much ſpoken of in the New Teſtament.

The *Anſwer* is,

Firſt, *the Church* in his houſe is not neceſſarily to be underſtood of *a Congregation*, ſuch as the propoſition intends, but of a *family Church*, as moſt of our Divines ſay.

Secondly, *ſuppoſe* it were *ſuch*: It doth not appear that the *Church in Aquila's houſe* was at *Epheſus* but in *Aſia*. We read that *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* travailed with *Paul* to *Epheſus*, and were left there, not that their *Church* was there, for themſelves might travaile where their *Church* travailed not with them.

Thirdly, *grant* they were ſuch a Church, and at *Epheſus*, yet the *anſwer* is, they were *Strangers* that were driven from *Rome* by *Claudius*, *Acts* 18.2. compared with *Rom.* 16.4. where alſo we read of *a Church in their houſe*, and therefore kept themſelves a diſtinct *Church* from the *Epheſians*, as the *Engliſh* doe in the *Netherlands*, and the *Dutch* in *England*; who chuſe rather to joyn with their own country people, whoſe dwellings are more remote, than with thoſe of another nation nearer to them. And *if the difference* of their *language* may argue *different* Congregations; and that they could not joyne in one (as is alledged) it will argue as ſtrongly, that *this Church*, and the *other* Congregation of *Epheſus*, could not be under *one Preſbyteriall Government*: And ordinary Officers had not ordinarily the gift of ſeverall tongues, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9. *To one is given the word of Wiſdome, to another, Knowledge, to another, diverſe kinds of tongues.*

Fourthly, as for *Jewes* and *Greekes* being mentioned; It makes nothing for the number, nor yet that for difference of language, there muſt needs be more Congregations than one; for the *Jewes* that lived among the Gentiles underſtood their language, *elſe* they would make ſo *many independent* Congregations.

That the multitude of beleivers were not more then could meet in one place.

THE CONTRARY to this firſt propoſition, *viz. that the multitude of beleivers were not more then could meet in one place* is proved thus.

It is apparent that the number of beleivers there when *Paul* came firſt to *Epheſus* was but about twelve, *Acts* 19. 7. *all the men were about twelve.* And when the number was increaſed, yet then the Church of *Epheſus* is called *one flock*, in relation to thoſe Elders which were at *Epheſus*, *Acts* 20. 28. which were willed by *Paul to feed that flock* by doctrine as he had done, by which its evident they might and did meet in one: *for Elders are paſtors onely for one congregation.*

"*It was ſaid that the feeding of this flock is to be underſtood partitivè,*
"*viz. ſome, one Congregation, ſome another, and ſo amongſt them the flock*
"*was fed.*

But if it be underſtood *partitivè* with reference to their *feeding*, it muſt be alſo with reference to their *overſeeing*, becauſe it is ſo expreſt in the text. *Take heed to your ſelves, & to the whole flock over which the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers, to feed the Church of God:* for no reaſon can be given why theſe words *feed the flock* ſhould be underſtood *partitivè*, and not theſe other words *take heed to the flock over which the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers:* and *if* their *overſeeing* and *ruling* be to be underſtood *partitivè*, then how doth this place argue a *Preſbyteriall Government over many Congregations?* And *if* it be ſaid the *many Congregations were not fixt ones*, then that diſtinction of *feeding partitive* falleth to the ground.

"Whereas it is replied *that the ſame phraſe as uſed*, 1 Pet. 5. 1. *feed*
"*the flock of God amongſt you, taking the overſight thereof*, muſt be under-
"ſtood *partitivè*, becauſe thoſe beleivers and Elders to whom the
"Apoſtle *Peter* writes, were *ſcattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappado-*
"*cia, Aſia, and Bithinia*, which could not meet in one Congregation.

It is *Anſwered.*

Firſt, that in *this place of Peter* there are no ſuch words, whereby the relation of the whole flock is equally carried to all thoſe Elders, *as* there are *in that* ſpeech of the Apoſtle to the *Elders of Epheſus*, Acts 20. 28. *take heed to the whole flock over which* (whole flock) *the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers.*

Secondly in this 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. 4. there are words which plainly point at *ſuch a diſtribution*, namely ἐν ὑμῖν [*among you,*] applied both to the

Elders

Elders, and to the *flock*: *The Elders* ἐν ὑμῖν *among you*, I exhort to *feed the flock* ἐν ὑμῖν, that is, *each Elders feed your flocks reſpectively* where ere they are *among you* in each country: therefore though it be underſtood *partitivè* in *Peter*, yet it follows not it ſhould be ſo underſtood, *Act.* 20. 28

" And if it be ſaid further, that although ruling and teaching be ap-
" plied to the ſame flock, the Elders need not be in both alike underſtood
" *partitivè* to performe their office: becauſe Elders when they *rule* do
" it in *conſeſſu*, and all joyn in every act; but when they *teach* they do
" it ſeverally, each by himſelf, therefore where ruling and teaching are
" applyed to Elders as over one flock, as they are *Acts* 20. they may
" well be ſuppoſed to do the one *partitivè*, the other not.

The anſwer is, it is true, where *Elders* rule, they do it in *collegio* whether over more or few, and when they *teach* they do it *ſeverally*, but ſtill both *ruling* and *teaching* are to be within the *ſame compaſſe*, in reſpect of *them* who are *ruled* and *taught*: for when Elders rule one Congregation in *collegio*, yet *each* of theſe Elders *overſee* and rule the *whole* flock as truely as he can be ſaid by *teaching* to *feed* that *whole* flock.

As for the ſecond and third propoſitions, " *that there were many Elders over that people as one flock, and one Church, and that they did govern this one flock.* The former propoſition not being proved, they make nothing to the proof of that *concluſion*, *That the Scripture holds forth that many Congregations may be under one Preſbyteriall Government.*

Sic ſubſcribitur:

Tho. Goodwin, *William Bridge,*
Philip Nye, *William Greenhill,*
Jer. Burroughes, *William Carter.*
Sidrach Sympſon.

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

The Anſwer of the *Aſſembly* of Divines;

unto the *Reaſons* of the Diſſenting Brethren, againſt the INSTANCE of the Church of *Epheſus*.

OUr Argument for many Congregations under one Presbyteriall Government, from the INSTANCE of the Church of *Epheſus*, conſiſted of 3. Propoſitions.

1. That the multitude of beleevers there, did make more Congregations then one.

2. There were many Elders over thoſe many Congregations as over one flock.

3. Thoſe ſeverall Congregations were one Church under one Presbyteriall Government:

Of which our *Brethren* inſiſt only upon the firſt, which was proved from

1. *Pauls* continuance and preaching for the ſpace of three years, *Acts* 20. 31. 19, 20.

2. The ſpeciall effect of the word there, that many that beleeved *came and confeſſed their deeds; many alſo of them which uſed curious Arts brought their bookes together, and burned them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and found it to be* 50000 *pieces of ſilver: ſo mightily grew the word of God and prevailed*, Acts 19. 18.

3. The mention made of *Jewes* and *Greeks*, Acts 19. 10. 17.

4. The reaſon of *Pauls* ſtay there, becauſe a great and effectuall door was opened. 1 *Cor.* 16. 8, 9.

5. Mention made of a particular Church in the houſe of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. who were then at *Epheſus*, Acts 18. 19. 24. 26.

All which laid together, do prove the Propoſition.

For the right underſtanding of which proof, we deſire that may be conſidered which our *Brethren* do not mention, but in the debate were often expreſſed, and therefore in the vote carefully added. *viz. That these Laid together do prove*, &c. arguments of neceſſity being anſwerable to the thing they prove: and ſo though the ſeverall particulars of the proo

roof should be singly but probabilities, yet being joyned together ake a sufficient proof, as many concurring likelihoods in courts a- nount to a good evidence, and many lesser stars make up a Galaxia: ur argument therefore may hold, though their answer (while they ake it asunder) should seem to make the severall particulars of it lesse emonstrative: But how doe they endeavour that?

"First, in a faire way of answer, they joyn divers of them together, the Apostle being three years at *Ephesus*, & his having there a great and effectual door opened, & that expression *so mightily grew the word* &c. to all which they answer, by denying the consequence, that therefore the converts in *Ephesus* were more then could meet in one place, and that for two reasons.

"1. For suppose it be granted there were two or three thousand "(though there is no sufficient ground to say there were neere so "many) yet they might all meet in one place, and this were enough "to shew, that there was a large and effectuall door opened to the "Apostle, and a comfortable fruit of his so long stay and preaching "there.

In our answer to which assertions, we shal consider what they say to the umber of believers there, & then how they could all meet in one place.

As to the first, those words of theirs, *There is no sufficient ground to y there were neere so many as two or three thousand* in our ordinary use f the phrase, *not neer so many*, import, that in our *Brethrens* judge- ents, the number fell far short of three, nay of two thousand, which in e generall, gives us just occasion in the spirit of meekenesse to de- re them to be wary how they use such arguments, or without clear vidence pitch upon such Tenents as force them to make use of them, hich as before in the Church of *Jerusalem*, so here again in the Church f *Ephesus*, do laboriously indeavour to straiten the number of belee- rs, that they might get them all into one roome, so as not to exceed e bounds of one Congregation, which not onely at first blush, but we ar if more neerly looked into, weakens the power of the Gospel in ose first most powerfull dispensations of it, and lesseneth the good- sse of God in that his plentifull redemption: by labouring to make the umber of converts as few as possibly may be. Which the Scriptures nd both Ancient and Modern Christian Writers are wont frequently nd studiously to set out to the full, and amplifie to the greater glory f Christ and his Gospel, which we beleeve our *Brethren* will be very ender of.

But to the particular in hand, we conceive that we have sufficient round to thinke that there were more then three, or at least two thou- sand

ſand beleevers in *Epheſus* in *Pauls* time, (and much rather afterward when Chriſt by *John* writes to them in the Revelation, when yet but one Church *chap.* 2. 1.) and that, had we no more for it, then what the three particulars by them repeated, may rationally perſwade.

The laſt of which, *viz.* that expreſſion *ſo mightily grew the word of God*, &c. they ſay nothing to, and therefore it ſtands for us ſtill in its ſtrength, for any thing that is ſaid againſt it.

The ſecond, *viz.* That large and effectuall door opened to him being an extraordinary expreſſion, muſt needs hold forth ſomething more then ordinary, and therefore may reaſonably make that great door wide enough, to let in more then three or two thouſand.

But the firſt is that which our Brethren moſt inſiſt on, *viz.* the Apoſtles long ſtay & preaching there, & here, though whilſt we conſider the worth of one ſoul, we cannot but confeſſe that the converſion of two or three thouſand were (as they truely ſay) *a comfortable* fruit of it: yet we cannot ſay or think it anſwerable to that abundant bleſſing, which God in that firſt plentifull harveſt vouchſafed to the endeavours of thoſe his chief labourers, who in the ſhort courſe of their miniſtry were to convert the world, eſpecially of *Paul*, who durſt affirme of himſelf, that he laboured more abundantly then they all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. and this the rather,

1. If we compare *Pauls* miniſtry with *Peters*, which he himſelf at leaſt equalleth in the ſucceſſe of it, *Gal.* 2. 8. *He that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apoſtleſhip of the circumciſion, the ſame was mighty in me towards the Gentiles.* Now then if *Peter* alone preaching (as our *brethren* in their former Reaſons conceived) or ſay with the reſt of the Apoſtles did in one day bring in about three thouſand ſoules, *Acts* 2. 41. and daily by day, many more *ver.* 47. ſo that within ſome few dayes, the number was grown up to five thouſand, or rather (as we have ſhewn in our former anſwer) was increaſed by the acceſſion of five thouſand more; it is very probable that *Pauls* preaching with his aſſiſtants, (for he had ſome or other ordinarily with him, *Act.* 15. 40. & 16. 3.) ſo many days and monthes as made up three years: ſhould within that ſpace bring in near (if not more then) three, or at leaſt two thouſand.

2. If we compare his ſtay, and conſtant paines at *Epheſus*, with the whole courſe of his own miniſtry, for if in three years abode, and in ceſſant preaching and warning night and day, and that with tears *Acts* 20. 31. (the like expreſſion we finde not elſewhere) he converted not near two thouſand ſoules, (as our *Brethren* thinke there is ground to ſay,) then by the rule of proportion, his harveſt among the *Gentiles* in all the reſt of his miniſtry and life, will be far ſhort of what

we conceive the Acts of the Apostles, and his own Epistles do hold out, and Divines have generally conceived of it.

3. If we shall consider the happy successe of *Pauls* ministry in the other particular places, as that he wrought upon a great part of a whole City at one sermon, *Acts* 13. 42. 44. on a great multitude of *Jewes* and *Greeks* at another, *Acts* 14. 1. at another on some of one sort, and on a great multitude of another, and of a third not a few, *Acts* 17.4. and the like we have *Acts* 18. 8. from whence it will not be groundlesse to conceive that he might convert near two or three thousand in three years constant course of a settled ministry in *Ephesus*.

4. If we consider what *Ephesus* was.

First an exceeding great city: the Metropolis and greatest Mart town of all *Asia*, within *Taurus*, as we read in *Strabo*, & which he saith was every day increasing, when he wrote that, which was about *30 years before *Pauls* being there, and therefore by that time grown much greater, the very Temple of *Diana*, that was in it, having a quarter of a mile round about it for an Asylum or Sanctuary, which must needs make the compasse of the whole city very great.

Secondly, as populous as great: by reason of the great and generall concourse of people thither, partly because of *Diana*, whom all *Asia*, and the world worshipped, *Acts* 19. 27. and partly for traffick, it being by reason of the convenience of its scituation, the greatest Mart town (as was before said out of *Strabo*) not only of *Asia* the lesse, but also of the half of *Asia* the greater.

Thirdly, more Superstitious and Idolatrous, then it was either great or populous, it being the place where by reason of Idolatry, sorcery and other sins that usually accompanied them: (as its said of *Pergamos*, *Revel.* 2. 13.) Satan had his seat, *Diana* her Temple, which they were so brutishly mad upon, *Acts* 19. 1 *Cor.* 15. 32.

All which put together adde a great advantage to the successe of the Apostles ministry there, it being better fishing in so wide a sea, and though by reason of the third particular, he might there finde many adversaries, yet he makes account that made not his door there opened any whit narrower, or lesse, but rather more effectuall, it being the end of Christs comming to dissolve the worke of the Devil, 1 *John* 3.8. and so usually having proved his greater glory, there most to advance his sceptre, where Satan hath had his highest throne, and the mad prophane *Ephesian* Idolater and Sorcerer not harder to be wrought upon, then the malicious *Jewish* Pharisee & Iusticiary, nor did it lesse redound to the glory of God, to redeem the one from Idolatry, then the other from Ceremonies: so that if in *Jerusalem* in few dayes so many thousands were

* Lib. 14. In the reigne of *Tyberius*, as appears from the conclusion of his 6. book: and *Casaubone* conceiveth about 12 years before *Tiberius* his death.

gained, there may be some ground, (though our *Brethren* thinke not) to say that in so many years there might at least neer two thousand be converted in *Ephesus*.

And should we delight in drawing parallels, as our *Brethren* did in their former Reasons between *Acts* 2. and *Acts* 5. we might here do it between what is said of *Jerusalem* and *Ephesus*. Its said of *Jerusalem* that the word was preached there daily in the Temple, and from house to house, *Acts* 5. 42. so at *Ephesus Paul* taught publikely and from house to house. *Acts* 20. 20. The Apostles at *Jerusalem* spake the word with boldnesse, *Acts* 4. 31. so its said did *Paul* at *Ephesus*, *Acts* 19. 8. and *Apollos*, *Acts* 18. 26. at *Jerusalem*, many wonders and signes were done by the Apostles, *Acts* 2. 43. and *Acts* 5. 12. in so much that *ver.* 15. even the shadow of *Peter* seemeth to have cured the sick, and at *Ephesus* God wrought special miracles, δυνάμεις οὐ τυχούσας, no ordinary ones by the hand of *Paul*, *Act.* 19. 11, 12. so that from his body were brought handkerchiefes and aprons, which did great miracles, and as some thinke, greater then *Peters* shadow did: and if upon the one, great multitudes were brought in, as its said there were, *Acts* 5. 14. why then not upon the other?

And as these wonders struck fear upon the Church of *Jerusalem*, and upon them that heard of them, *Acts* 5. 11. so also at *Ephesus*, Act. 19. 17.

The extraordinary effect of the word at *Jerusalem*, was expressed by extraordinary acts of believers, as in selling their goods, &c. *Acts* 2. 45. *Acts* 5. 34. so at *Ephesus* in confessing their deeds, and openly burning their books, *Acts* 19. 18, 19.

In the Church of *Jerusalem* its said the word of God increased, *Act.* 7. and grew, *Acts* 12. 24. so at *Ephesus*, Acts 19. 20.

So that if *Jerusalem* and *Ephesus* in all these particulars were parallel, and if in bigness equall, why should we judge that in the number of converts they should be so unproportionable, that when in the Scripture we read that in one of them there were in two dayes brought home at least five thousand, our *Brethren* should think that *there is no ground to say* that in three years time of *Pauls* constant, incessant preaching and weeping, there were neere three or two thousand converted in the other.

5. If lastly we take notice of the fair way and great advance that was made for the happier progresse of *Pauls* settled ministry in *Ephesus*, by the foregoing labours of *Aquila* and *Apollos*, both able and faithfull, and the latter set out to be very powerfull, and diligent, and earnest in the worke: and this for some longer time, to the bringing in of disci-

ples

ples of note with forraigne Churches, *Acts* 18.19. *ad finem*, who whether they were but about the number of twelve, (as our *Brethren* afterward ſay) we ſhall conſider when we come to that place, and hope we ſhall make it appear to be otherwiſe; mean while, comparing this fifth particular with all the former, and taking in thoſe firſt fruits of *Epheſus* before *Pauls* ſettled miniſtry there, with the rich and plentifull harveſt of his three years after labours, we conceive (under favour) contrary to what our *Brethren* peremptorily aſſert, that there were neer two or three thouſand believers in the Church of *Epheſus*.

2. "But they ſuppoſing there were no more, adde that ſo many as "two or three thouſand might all meet in one place.

We anſwer, but if there were more (as from what hath been ſaid may be gathered) then we have more cauſe to ſay they might not: no not though they were but two or three thouſand.

Partly in regard of *Epheſus*, it being an heatheniſh City, mad upon their Idol *Diana*, and her worſhip, and therefore not likely either to aſſigne, or allow them a publike meeting place for the ordinary and conſtant exerciſe of a contrary Religion.

And partly in regard of ſome ſpeciall duties of Church communion, particularly of receiving the Sacrament: eſpecially if ſitting at a table, (as the manner then ſeemes to have been) which no roome in a private houſe would have been large enough for. And if it be ſaid, that they met in the ſchoole of *Tyrannus*, Acts 19.9. which was a more publike place, and might be capacious enough for ſuch a number, in ſuch a ſervice: We anſwer, we cannot ſay how large it was, nor can they prove that it was ſo large: but this we can ſay, that we read not of the Diſciples receiving the Sacrament, but only of *Pauls* diſputing there; that ſchoole being of that uſe then and there to *Paul*, which the Temple at *Jeruſalem* was before to the other Apoſtles, *viz.* not the place of their ſelect Church meeting for ſuch ordinances, of which the Diſciples were onely partakers, but where (having indeed ſeparated from the *Jews*, and left their Synagogue) he diſputed or reaſoned (διελέγετο) with others as well as Chriſtians, *Acts* 19.9, 10.

"2. Their ſecond reaſon of denying the conſequence, is becauſe this "efficacy of the word preached by *Paul*, hath reference not onely "to *Epheſus*, but alſo to all *Aſia*, as they gather from the words of "*Demetrius*, *Acts* 19.26. and when *Paul* Acts 20.31. ſaith *for* "*the ſpace of three years, he ceaſed not to warne every one both day and* "*night with tears*: the words are not to be reſtrained to his being at "*Epheſus*, but to be underſtood of his being in *Aſia*, as appears "by *verſ.* 18. ye know from the firſt day that I came into *Aſia*, &c.

1. We readily grant that the efficacy of *Pauls* ministry was not confined to *Ephesus*, but reached to all *Asia*, which we take up, not upon *Demetrius* his truſt, *Acts* 19. 26. but from the holy Ghosts own words, *Acts* 19. 10. *Ephesus* being the place of greateſt reſort from all quarters both for traffique and the worſhip of *Diana*: and ſo the filling of *Asia* with converts, was not ſo much by *Pauls* going abroad out of *Ephesus*, as by thoſe multitudes flocking thither, and hearing him at *Ephesus*; whence we may infer two things to our purpoſe from this inſtance of *Ephesus*, as we did in our anſwers to their former reaſons, from that of *Jeruſalem*.

1. That many comming from all quarters, and being converted by hearing *Paul* in *Ephesus*, its very likely that diverſe of them might change their habitations, and come and ſit down at *Ephesus* by the Apoſtles conſtant miniſtry there, and ſo adde to the increaſe of that Church.

2. That if his doctrine filled all *Asia*, then much more proportionably it filled *Ephesus*, where it was conſtantly by the Apoſtle himſelf preached, and from whence it ſpred into other parts abroad.

2. Whereas they ſay *this efficacy* of the word, hath reference not only to *Ephesus*, but alſo to all *Asia*: we anſwer, that *this efficacy*, namely that which we proved out of *Acts* 19. 18, 19, 20. in thoſe many converts confeſſing their deeds, and burning their bookes, ſo mightily grew the word, &c. doth ſo plainly and clearly relate to *Ephesus* where the thing was done, that it needeth no other proof then the very looking on the Text.

3. For that ſpeech of *Demetrius*, Acts 19. 26. as we did not cite it, ſo need we not much to heed it, he would be ſure out of his malice to take in, and ſnatch at all he could, *ad invidiam & odium exaggerandum*: and what though the efficacy of *Pauls* doctrine reached all *Asia*, as *Demetrius* ſpeech (which they alledge) aſſerts: doth that hinder it to have a more ſpeciall efficacy in *Ephesus*, which our proof plainly manifeſts? they being two diſtinct things, and their allegation not croſſing, but confirming ours: if the efficacy of *Pauls* miniſtry was ſo great in all *Asia*, as they truly affirme, then was it much greater in *Ephesus* as we inferred upon the grounds before mentioned.

4. For that of *Acts* 20. 31. by us alleadged for *Pauls* three years aboade and preaching at *Ephesus*, which they ſay, muſt not be reſtrained to *Ephesus*, but intended to *Asia*, which they prove from *verſ.* 18. we ſay,

1. That in *Acts* 19. 8, 9, 10. there ſeemes to be expreſſe mention of his aboad at *Ephesus* for two years, and three moneths, which is a great part of the three years, nor is it unlikely but the buſineſſe in that chapter

further

further related, might help well to make up the reſt, or ſhould we take in (as ſome do) that paſſage of his through the upper coaſts, *Acts* 19.1. before his firſt comming to *Epheſus*, within the compaſs of thoſe 3 years, and grant alſo that whilſt he remained at *Epheſus* he looked ſometimes abroad, (though that we read not of) yet no conſtant aboad, nor any longer ſtay of his do we find any where elſe for that time, which ſhould it fall ſhort of ſome weekes, or two or three moneths of three years, yet *Rotundatio numeri* is no ſtranger in Scripture accounts, & its ſufficient for the purpoſe which we brought it for: namely, to ſhew that his ſo long aboad at *Epheſus*, and his conſtant inſtant preaching there with tears, might in all likelihood convert more then could for all acts of worſhip be but one Congregation, to meet in one place.

2. For that which is urged from *verſ.* 18. from the firſt day that I came into *Aſia*, &c. we ſay, true indeed the preciſe firſt day that he came into *Aſia*, he might not come to *Epheſus*, as *Acts* 19. 1. yet

Firſt, that phraſe ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας from the firſt day, by an *Hebraiſme*, may be very well taken in ſome latitude, and put for the beginning of his acceſſe into thoſe parts, as if he had ſaid, from my firſt comming into *Aſia*, in a manner, I have beene with you all the while.

Secondly, this makes more for our purpoſe, that he tels the *Elders* of *Epheſus*, that he had been ſo conſtantly with them, that in a manner from the firſt day of his commiug into *Aſia*, he had not been abſent from them, ſo that the more that our *Brethren* ſtand to the preciſe firſt day of his comming into *Aſia*, the more they gratifie us, thereby allowing him the more time for his being at *Epheſus*, which we plead for.

Thirdly, but in caſe it be objected that this followeth not, becauſe our *Brethren* here expreſly affirme that the Apoſtles meaning is of *Aſia*, and not onely of *Epheſus*, and ſo his ſpeech is directed to the *Elders* of all *Aſia*, and not of *Epheſus* onely: we confeſſe that in our anſwers to their former reaſons, we ſaid that ſome ſo thought, but did never thinke that our *Brethren* would, which becauſe here they do, they will give us leave to remind them, that in their former anſwers they were of a contrary judgement, that they were the *Elders* of the Church of *Epheſus* only, and that which was included in the bounds of one only Congregation. But if now they be the *Elders* not only of *Epheſus*, but alſo of *Aſia*, that he ſpeaks to, *verſ.* 18. and in *verſ.* 17. we have them expreſſed, by πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, *Elders* of the Church in the ſingular number, then upon this ſuppoſition we have here found an *Aſian* Nationall Church, and a further proof of the propoſition we are upon, that very many particular Congregations may be under one *Presbyteriall* Government.

But having thus far in their Anſwer more fairly put three of our Ar-

guments together, in what follows, they otherwise then we intended, take the rest asunder, and here single out that, out of *Acts* 19. 18,19, and pitch only upon the price of the bookes: to which they answer,

"That according to *Calvins* account, the 50000 pieces of silver a-
"mount but to 9000.l. *French*, which is about 670. l. sterling at
"18. d. the Franke according to the Bezea, but to 8700. l.
"*French*, and according to *Brerewood* (who estimates every ἀργύριον
"at 7.d.ob.) but to 1406.l. which some one mans study now of com-
"mon bookes, and not manuscripts (as they were) is worth,
"& therefore then, when there was no Printing, a few mens books,
"yea, a few books of so curious and gainfull Arts, might well be
"worth that money, and then how doth this argue such a multi-
"tude of beleevers as could not meet in one Congregation?

To which we reply, and complain herein of a double wrong, that not only this whole proof from *Acts* 19.18,19,20. that it may be the easilier broken is pluck't as a single arrow out of the sheafe, whereas we had bound it up with the rest it had more strength, but also that whereas there were four things in it argumentative to our purpose, all which we looked at, our *Brethren* pitch onely upon this third of them, which we least of all regarded.

1. The first was, that many of severall sorts of persons are there expressed, *many that beleeved came and confessed, vers.* 18. and again *many of them that used curious Arts, brought their bookes*, &c. *vers.* 19. which words seeme to distribute the beleevers there into three ranks: 1. Such as had used curious Arts, and there were ἱκανοὶ sufficient store of them. 2. Other beleevers that came and confessed their deeds, and there were πολλοὶ many more of them: and 3. They imply that there were other Disciples that did beleeve, but did not then come, for 'tis said that πολλοὶ τῶν πεπιστευκότων, many of them that beleeved came, which argues they were other beleevers, that did not, which might be a greater number.

But all three sorts put together, might make a number so great as may be considerable to our present purpose.

2. The second thing we looked at in that place, was their bringing of their books and burning them before all men, which as Mr. *Cartwright* observes they durst not have done, had they not been, if not the major part, yet such a sufficient number, which might even in that populous City have carried out that action, which could not but by the opposite party be deeply distasted. In Queen *Maries* time a small number of Protestants durst not have burnt their Mass-books in *Cheapside*; it was when *Luthers* Doctrine began generally to be received, that he burnt the *Popes* Decretals in *Wittenberg*.

3. The

3. The third thing was the price of the books burnt, amounting to 50000 pieces of ſilver, which becauſe we found in the Text, we ſet down in our proof, but did very little inſiſt upon in our debate, and yet 'tis only our *Brethren* pitch upon in their anſwer, as hoping to overthrow our argument in wounding of it, in what they conceive to be the weakeſt part of it. But we have ſeen the ſtrength of what they ſay againſt it. In their reply whereto, we ſhall not need to trouble the Honourable Houſes nor our ſelves, either in calling our *Brethren* to account for caſting up 9000. l. *French* to about 670. l. ſterling, at 18. d. the Frank, which if it be 2.s. the Frank, (as ſome ſay) will amount to 900. l. ſterling, or againe for caſting up 5000 pieces of 7. d. ob. the piece to about 1406. l. which comes to 1562. l. 10. s. or in examining *Calvins* or *Bezaes* or *Brerewoods* account, though the laſt of the three in the ſame place cited acknowledgeth a *duplex Argenteum Hebr: Mat.* 27. 15. and that he acknowledgeth, 2. s. 6. d. *Græcum*, which he rates at 7. d. ob. and though he reacheth upon the latter, as meant in this place, yet we want a cogent argument to evince it; for though the thing were done in *Epheſus*, where they would reckon it according to their coyne: yet what hinders, but that while *Luke* relates it, he might expreſſe it according to the coyne of his owne Country, as an *Engliſh* man writing of what was ſold in the Low-countries for ſo many ſtivers, or dollars, according to our *Engliſh* coyne, may ſay it was ſold for ſo many (proportionably) pence or ſhillings? And if ſo here and the *Argenteum Hebraum* be meant, and that were of the value before mentioned, theſe 50000 ſilverlings will amount to 6250. l. ſterling, which would help well to furniſh many of our ſtudies: and ſure there are not now, when the world is ſo full of bookes, many particular men, who have in their greateſt overgrown Libraries, bookes of that value, being all of the ſame art or facultie as theſe were, eſpecially of ſuch a kind of ſtudy as this was, which indeed was curious, and it may be gainfull as our *Brethren* ſay: but ſuch as either few ſtudied, and ſo they had few chapmen for their bookes, and ſo their price was leſſe, or if many did as the Text implies (the Ἐφέσια γραμματα being then famous) then there was more ſtore of them, and ſo they were not ſuch rarities as our Manuſcripts now are, which raiſeth their price amongſt us. But as we will not ſay, how much ſuch ſtuffe, as they were, was well worth, as our *Brethrens* words are, ſo can neither they nor we tell what was the rate of their written bookes then, that the bookes were not few, (as our *Brethren* ſeem to thinke they might be) the Text implies, but that the men were many (which is the thing that we moſt ſtand upon) it plainly expreſſeth, and this price of the books help's to prove both, unleſſe our *Brethren* can

ſhew

shew that the bookes were great volumes, and that of many and severall Arguments and Authors: For should they be but small books, there must be many of them that should arise to such a summe. They would be very many Primers or Grammars that would amount to 6250. l. or till it be but to their 1406. l. and should they not be many, but most what the same Authors and Arguments (as generally all Students in a science, have the same principall and fundamentall books of it) then many books would argue many owners, and so many books that should amount to such a summe, would prove very many practitioners, whom if you consider either as learned, many of which are not called 1 *Cor.* 1. or as deeply ingaged in Satans depths and mysteries, and so lesse hope of their learning to know Jesus Christ, you must needs conclude, that if so many of them, then very many more of other sorts & ranks, in that populous City were converted unto Christ, that might fill more then one Congregation, and this particular, how ever our Brethren seeme to undervalue, yet the holy Ghost pleaseth to set an especiall marke on it, in his Epiphonematical acclamation, which thereupon he makes, *ver.* 20.

4. Which is the 4. branch of this proofe that we insisted on, *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed*, which plainly sheweth, that the holy Ghost summed not up the value of those ungodly books onely, to shew the dearnesse of them, but the multitude also of those that had burnt them. For had he said onely that the Word of God prevailed ἰσχύσεν, it might have related to the great power it had to make those men willingly to put themselves to so great a losse, and so the fewer the men had been, their losse had been the greater, and the Word had prevailed with them the more: but there is added also the αὐξανε, *the word of God increased*, which *Calvin* saith, relates to the number of the men that had done that thing, and which in those two other *Act.* 6. 7. and *Act.* 12. 24. (where alone this kind of speech is used) expresseth the great increase of multitudes of believers, as we shewed in our answer to our Brethers former Reasons.

To our instance of a particular Church in *Aquilas* house, our Brethren Answer,

" 1. That is not necessary to be meant of a Congregation, such as the " proposition intends, but of a Family Church, as most of our Di" vines say.

1. For the judgement of Divines, though divers think as our Brethren say; yet many are of another minde: *Bullinger* and *Erasmus* on *Rom.* 15. read it, *the Congregation in their house*. *Lyra* so expounds it, on which place *Gualther* thus, *Ecclesiam habuerunt domesticam, i.e. domus*

ſuam Eccleſiæ Conſecrarunt ut in eâ haberentur ſacri cœtus: And *Oecume-nius*, though he alleadge both interpretations, and ſo doth *Deodate*, yet he ſets this in the firſt place, and for 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. the interlineary gloſs hath *Congregatione fratrum.* And though *Beza* would have it underſtood of a Family, yet both he and *Deodate* note on this place, that in one and the ſame City there were more Aſſemblies or Congregations of the faithful then one. *Pet. Martyr* on *Rom.* 16. and 1 *Cor.* 16. ſaith, the words may ſuffer a double expoſition, either of a Congregation, or of their own family; but he ſaith the former is more probable: And ſo doth M. *Mede*, which I underſtand not to be ſpoken of their families, but of the congregation of the Saints there wont to aſſemble for the performance of divine duties ἢ συνεχομένῳ κατ' οἶκον αὐτῆς ἐκκλησίαν.

So *Oecumenius* expounds the like ſaying of *Nymphas. Col.* 4. 15.

2. For reaſons which may perſwade us to continue ſtill in this our judgement, we have theſe.

1. We find the ſame word before, ſo uſed in the ſame verſe, the Apoſtle in the beginning of it had ſaid, *the Churches of Aſia ſalute you*, and after addes the Church in *Aquila*, and *Priſcillas* houſe, as one of that number, and of note, for forwardneſſe and love to the Saints, and if the ſtory of *Acts* 18. be well conſidered, their opinion will be probable, *who make it the firſt Church that was in Epheſus.*

2. We finde not elſewhere in Scripture, the name of a Church given to a Family: But on the contrary in that very Chapter, where the Apoſtle meaneth the perſons of any ones Family, he uſeth another phraſe, as ἢ ἐκίαν, *verſ.* 15. not ἐκκλησίαν, and *Rom.* 16. 10. 11. τοὺς ἐκ τῆς, and τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς, *verſe* 14. and the like.

3. The Church in their houſe is diſtinguiſhed from themſelves, ſo that it muſt then be meant of their Children or Servants, or ſome ſtrangers that lodged in their houſe, but theſe to be ſo ſaluted, and as a Church, ſeemes no way probable.

4. This of having a Church in their houſe, is only ſpoken of three. Of *Nymphas, Col.* 4. 15. of *Philemon, Philem.* 1. 2. and of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla, Rom.* 16. 4, 5. 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. But ſhall we think, that in thoſe prolix Catalogues of ſalutations, none had Chriſtian Families but theſe three that are thus remembred? No! We read beſides, of them of the houſhold of *Ariſtobulus, Rom.* 16. 10. and *Narciſſus, ver.* 11. and of them that were with *Aſyncretus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas* & *Hermes, v.* 14. and of the houſhold of *Oneſiphorus*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 19. and yet no mention of Churches in their houſes, which expreſſion therefore, muſt not hold out a godly Family, which was common to many, but ſome ſpeciall thing peculiar to them, to whom it is applyed. And what ſhould this be, but what we now plead for? Namely, a Congregationall Church uſed to

meet in *Aquilas* and *Priscillas* house.

5. Which agreeth well with their qualifications, the man being a Preacher, and both *Pauls* helpers in Christ, *Rom.* 16.3. & instructers of *Apollos*, *Act.* 18.16. in the fore-rank of Beleevers, and therefore in their house rather then anothers might be the meeting of the Disciples.

6. The phrase also κατ' οἶκον is the same with that *Act.* 2.46. which speakes of a Congregationall meeting, and that word is in all the foure places.

7. This exposition also agreeth with other places, where we finde Church meetings in private houses, because of the persecution of those times, *Act.* 12.12. 20.8. 19.9. 28.23. but we passe over this, and come to their second Answer, it is,

2 "Suppose it were a Congregation, yet it doth not appear that "the Church in *Aquilas* house was at *Ephesus*, but in *Asia*: we reade, "that *Aquila* and *Priscilla* travelled with *Paul* to *Ephesus*, and were "left there; not that their Church was there for themselves might travel, "where their Church travelled not with them.

1. We hope our Brethren doe not intend to deny *Ephesus* to be in *Asia*, (as their words seeme to imply) when they say that it appears not, that the Church in *Aquilas* house was at *Ephesus*, but in *Asia*; nay, if in *Ephesus*, then in *Asia*, but if they mean in some other place of *Asia*, we say,

2. It no where in Scripture appeares, that *Aquila* seated himselfe in any other place of *Asia*, but in *Ephesus*; or that the Church in his house, was any where in *Asia*, if not in *Ephesus*.

3. We may not suppose that they, and their Church parted without great cause; now we read not of any such particular cause, why they should part, or that *de facto* they did; at *Rome* we finde them together, *Rom.* 16.4, 5. and at *Corinth*, as it may seeme from their acquaintanse with the Church of *Corinth*, as appears from the salutation, 1 *Cor.* 16.19. which place doth more clearely prove that they were together at *Ephesus* also, for thence it appeares they were at that place, from whence the Apostle wrote that Epistle, which though the spurious Post script saith was from *Philippi*, yet both the Syriack and Arabick Translatours *Oecumenius*, and generally, both Protestant and Popish Writers agree, that it was from *Ephesus*, and prove it from 1 *Cor.* 16.5. 8. with *Act.* 19. 21, 22. and by diverse other arguments there, then both *Aquila* and his household, and the Church in his house were, and *Paul* with them as sojourning with them, if we give credence to the addition that we meet with in *Ambrose*, *apud quos hospitor*, and which *Beza* saith, he found in some ancient Latine Copies.

Beza, Deodate, Thorndike, Cudworth, and Baronius, C. à Lapide &c.

But

But our Brethren as it ſeemeth, not much truſting to theſe two firſt allegations, paſſe on to that, which they ſay, is the Anſwer: and what is that?

"3. Grant they were a Church, and at *Epheſus*; yet the Anſwer is, "they were ſtrangers that were driven from *Rome* by *Claudius*, "*Act.* 18.2. with *Rom.* 16.3,4. & therefore kept themſelves a diſtinct "Church from the *Epheſians*, as the *Dutch* in *England*, who chuſe "rather to joyne with their owne Country people, whoſe dwel-"lings are more remote, then with thoſe of another Nation nearer "to them. And if the difference of their language may argue diffe-"rent Congregations, and that they could not joyne in one, "(as is alleadged) it will argue as ſtrongly, that this Church and "the other Congregation at *Epheſus* could not be under one Preſ-"byteriall Government: and ordinary officers had not ordinarily "the gift of ſeverall tongues, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9. to one is given, &c.

But THE Anſwer perhaps may prove none: for

1. Not to inſiſt on that (which yet we cannot but take notice of) *viz.* That by what they here ſay they make account that *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, and the Church in their houſe, being firſt at *Rome*, Rom. 16.4,5. and expelled thence be the edict of *Claudius*, came to *Epheſus*, and were then that Church mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. which is a foule miſtake in Cronologie, that firſt Epiſt. to the *Corinthians*, though ſet after in our Bibles, being written before that to the *Romans*, and ſo that Church of theirs then at *Epheſus*, when mentioned 1 *Cor.* 16. was before that being of it at *Rome*, mentioned *Rom.* 16.

2. There is no likelihood that *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, though ſtrangers, would yet eſtrange and withdraw themſelves to a peculiar Church diſſevered from the Presbyterie by the Apoſtles there ſetled: their Chriſtian wiſedome, charity, and zeale for the promoting of Gods glory, and their owne and others good, would not ſuffer them to withdraw themſelves from that communion of Saints, and rob themſelves of ſuch a bleſſed advantage and opportunity, eſpecially the partition wall between *Jew* and *Gentile* being known now to be broken down, which the Apoſtle ſpeakes ſo fully to in his Epiſtle to theſe *Epheſians*. And therefore for ſome reaſons, they might be a diſtinct Congregation, which our argument aſſerts: yet for theſe reaſons they would not be ſuch a diſtinct Church, as to ſever themſelves from ſo uſefull an aſſociation in joynt Government.

3. There was not the like reaſon for their ſevering themſelves from the Ch: in *Epheſus*, as is & hath been for the *French* or *Dutch* Churches, keeping themſelves diſtinct from the *Engliſh*, namely, difference of Church-

government, which was the speciall cause of their earnest renitency, when the Bishops strong hand would have violently bowed them to it.

4. The difference of language, we shewed might be an argument for severall Congregations in the instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*, because the *Jewes* language was not in such common use, and yet not so even there, but that they might well be under one *Presbyteriall* Government, as appears from our Answer to our *Brethrens* first Reasons, where this part of their argument is answered, to which we refer.

But it was not alleadged by us here in this instance of the Church of *Ephesus*, the Greek tongue being then of more common use, and the *Jewes* that lived among the *Gentiles* understanding their language, as our *Brethren* themselves tell us in their next and last Answer, which is this,

"As for *Jewes* and *Greeks* being menti oned, it makes nothing to the "number, nor yet that for difference of language there must needs "be more Congregations then one: For the *Jewes* that lived a- "mong the *Gentiles*, understood their language, else they would "make so many Independent Congregations.

1. As to that first clause, wherein they say, the mentioning of *Jews* and *Greeks* makes nothing to the number: we say, yes sure, we doubt not but our *Brethren* will grant us it maketh something, if they consider

1. That in both the verses cited, *Acts* 19. 10, 17. there is an [ALL] mentioned, ALL *Jewes* and *Greeks*, and we hope that all is something to the number.

2. That there is an addition of one ALL to the other, of *Greeks* to *Jews* πᾶσιν Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησι, the bare adding of *Greeks* to *Jews* speakes an addition of number, & when the holy Ghost joynes them with a τε καὶ, he tels us, he would have us take notice of it, that he intends an addition of *Greeks* to *Jewes* to increase the number, and when there is an addition of an ALL of the one, to an ALL of the other; (which was very great in so large & populous a city) such a great increase, as (at least joyned with other proofs) may make something for our purpose, even to make up more then one single Congregation. *Paul* for certain intended to expresse some inlargement of the number of them to whom he was a debtor, when he said he was debtor Ἕλλησι τε καὶ βαρβάροις, σόφοις τε καὶ ἀνοήτοις, in the same phrase *Rom.* 1. 14. and of that ALL of beleevers, when he said the Gospel was the power of God to salvation, παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, Ἰουδαίῳ τε καὶ Ἕλλωι, in the same word *vers.* 16. it would be taken to make much for the increase of the number, if when we had said all *English* men should take the Covenant, we should adde, all *English* men

men and *Scotch* men alſo, and this was all that we meant, by producing the mention of all both *Jewes* and *Greeks*.

2. For as for that which in the ſecond clauſe our *Brethren* adde, as though we here meant, *that for difference of the language of* Jewes *and* Greeks *there muſt needs be more Congregations then one*, we again ſay, it was alledged by us to that purpoſe before, in the Inſtance of the Church of *Jeruſalem*, but not in this of the Church of *Epheſus* for the reaſon foreſaid, and therefore this part of their anſwer, is to a ſuppoſition of their own, but to no argument of ours now in hand.

3. And therefore that Reaſon which they adde, *For the* Jews *that lived among the* Gentiles *underſtood their language:* confutes nothing that we ſaid, but ſerves to anſwer to what they themſelves objected a little before in their third anſwer, and to clear this truth, that though *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* were ſtrangers, and of a different language, and ſo might be in a diſtinct Congregation, yet this difference of their language from that of *Epheſus*, ſeeing they underſtood it, could be no hinderance, but that they with the reſt of the *Epheſian* beleevers, might well be under one and the ſame Presbyteriall Government.

4. Though for that which they adde in the cloſe, that *unleſſe they underſtood their language, they would have made ſo many Independent Congregations*, we might juſtly deny the conſequence: for though upon that ground of different language they might well make ſeveral diſtinct Congregations, yet it followeth not, that therefore they ſhould be Independent ones, but notwithſtanding it might be under one common Eccleſiaſtical government, as ſuppoſe the *Welch* ſhould not generally underſtand our *Engliſh*, yet they might be (as they are) under the ſame civil government with us: all of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla's* Church might not underſtand the *Epheſian* language, and ſo it might be neceſſary they ſhould be preached to in a diſtinct Congregation, by ſuch of their owne whoſe language all might underſtand, whereas ſo many only as might joyne with the reſt of the common Presbytery in point of common Government, had need to have underſtood the *Epheſian* language: nay two men may be fit to joyne in a common Government, though they do neither of them underſtand one anothers native ſpeech, if they did both underſtand a third language.

Our *Brethren* having thus indeavoured to Anſwer our argument from this Inſtance of the Church of *Epheſus*, for the propoſition that there were more beleevers there, then did make one Congregation: in the next place, they bring their arguments againſt it.

"The firſt whereof is this: They ſay it is apparent that the number of

" beleevers there, when *Paul* came firſt to *Epheſus*, was but about
" 12. *Acts* 19. 7. *All the men were about twelve.*

1. Its an *apparent miſtake of our Brethren* to ſay, that it was *Pauls* firſt comming to *Epheſus*, when he met with thoſe 12 men mentioned *Act.* 19. 7. if they had but minded the foregoing Chapter, *Acts* 18. 19, 20, 21. they might have found him there, and departed thence, before this his after comming and return thither, mentioned in this 19. Chap.

2. It is *apparent* that all men there particularly ſpoken of, were but about 12. but it is nothing leſſe then *apparent* that there were then no more Diſciples at *Epheſus*, but the contrary rather is apparent.

1. From what we read *verſ.* 1. that *Paul* found there τινὰς μαθητὰς, not τὸς μαθητὰς, Diſciples indefinitely, or the Diſciples that were there, as we have that phraſe, *Acts* 21. 4. but τινὰς μαθητὰς, certain Diſciples by way of diſtinction from the reſt (for τινὲς & πάντες are not *termini convertibiles*) as either being the firſt that upon his comming thither he met with, or that afterward he had this ſpeciall intercourſe with, the ſtory whereof is there related, ſome certaine ſpeciall Diſciples that were of that judgement and way, which would argue rather that there were ſome of another, at leaſt doth not argue there were not any beſides, no more then if it ſhould be ſaid that one in Queen *Maries* daies comming to *Frankeford* found πινὰς, ſome that ſtood for the book of Common Prayer, it would be thence concluded that all there were of that judgement.

2. From that great ſpace of time, which came between *Pauls* firſt being at *Epheſus*, Chap. 18. and this finding of thoſe 12 at his ſecond comming in the 19 Chap. and the meanes of converſion and ſalvation, which they injoyed in that interim. In that time *Paul* goes from *Epheſus* to *Ceſarea*, and ſo from one place to another in order, ſtrengthening the Diſciples, *Act.* 18. 22, 23. and after through the upper coaſts, *Act.* 19. 1. which journies & his ſtaies in ſome of the places mentioned, would take up ſome longer time, & in that time, *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* were at *Epheſus* and there not idle, as appears from what they did to *Apollos*, who alſo came thither in that time, that eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, who being inſtructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in the Spirit, taught diligently the things of the Lord, and this as may ſeeme to the Diſciples in their Church meetings *verſ.* 25. it being added after as a diſtinct thing *verſ.* 26. that *he began to ſpeak boldly in the Synagogue*: now what a poor harveſt would it have been onely to have gleaned up about 12 raw ignorant Diſciples by the paines of ſuch faithfull

Act. 18. 18, 19.

and

and earneſt labourers ſo long continued, in thoſe growing times, wherein the word had another kinde of ſucceſſe then now it hath uſually. And yet even in our dayes, meaner men and women then *Apollo*, *Aquila*, and *Priſcilla*, if they beſtir themſelves as they did, in a leſſe time can tell how to gaine more then above twelve followers.

3. Anſwerably in the third place this appeares from the ſucceſſe that *Aquilas* and *Apollos* labours had in that interim, for *Acts* 18. 27. we read that there were Brethren ſo conſiderable, that when *Apollos* was diſpoſed to goe to *Achaia*, they were able to commend him to the Diſciples there, exhorting them to receive him, *Act.* 18. 27. which authority, ſo few and ignorant Diſciples, were not likely to riſe up to with the *Corinthians* in *Achaia*, who were ſo enriched with all utterance and knowledge, 1 *Cor.* 1. 5.

4. Theſe 12. were raw and ignorant, *Act.* 19. 2. and onely inſtructed in *Johns Baptiſme*, *v.* 3. as *Apollos* was, when he firſt came to *Epheſus*. *Act.* 18. 25. But *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* better inſtructed him, *ver.* 26. and ſo certainly would they have done theſe twelve alſo, if they had been of their Congregation; ſo that they could not be all the Diſciples that were there, there was *Aquila* and his Church beſide, of which ſome conceive thoſe Brethren, *Act.* 18. 27. were. But *Calvin* is confident they were not theſe twelve.

5. He alſo conceives, they might be ſpeciall men, and ſuch as *Beza* conceives were made Officers there, which way that paſſage, *ver.* 6. of *Pauls* impoſing of hands on them, and their thereupon ſpeaking with tongues and Propheſying ſeemeth ſomething to prop nd. Now if ſo, it wil be no ſound reaſoning of our Brethren, that becauſe there were about twelve, whom the Apoſtle ordained for Officers, that therefore there ſhould be no more Diſciples.

3. But grant there had been but about twelve then, yet becauſe then, handfull of corne on the top of the mountaine was ſo mightily to increaſe, as after, to ſhake like *Lebanon*, *Pſal.* 72. 16. there might ſoone be more, then to make up one onely Congregation, before *Johns* writing Revelation, which was ſo many yeeres after, and yet then *Epheſus* but one Church, *Rev.* 2. 1. Nay in *Pauls* time, after his own three yeers miſtry there, as was before ſhewed, together with the aſſiſtance of diers others his fellow-labourers there in this work, (which was the Aſſemblies ſecond proofe, but our Brethren touch it not) as *Luke*, who was with *Paul* in all theſe his travailes, *Act* 16. 16, 17. compared with *Act.* 20. 5, 6. *Soſthenes* for he is joyned with him in the front of the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinths*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. which was written from *Epheſus*,

as

as we shewed before, *Aquila*, *Act.* 18. 19. and 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. *Timotheus* and *Erastus*, whom he sent not from *Ephesus* till towards his owne departure thence, *Act.* 19. 22. to whom he might adde *Gaius* & *Aristarcus*, *Act.* 19. 29. and 20. 4. if they were Preachers, as is probable they were: all which must have more then one Congregation to be imployed in.

"And when the number was increased, yet then the Church of *Ephe-*
"*sus* is called one flock, in relation to those Elders which were at
"*Ephesus*, *Act.* 20. 28. which were willed by *Paul* to feed that flock
"by doctrine as he had done, by which it is evident they might
"and did meet in one: for Elders are Pastors onely to one Con-
"gregation.

1. It was but even now that these both Elders and Flock were made by our Brethren to be of all *Asia*, and not onely of *Ephesus*, when it would help them to deny the consequence of our argument, but here to make out their owne argument, they must not be of all *Asia*, (for then we should hope there would be more Congregations then one) but must be confined to *Ephesus* onely; so they were in their former Reasons, but extended to all *Asia* in the former part of this Answer, and now in the third place contracted againe to *Ephesus*. This, if an inadvertency, may easily be pardoned, but such a liberty to contract and extend at pleasure for present advantage (if we may call it an advantage) must not be granted.

2. There is no sufficient reason why our Brethren should restrain that feeding, which the Apostle there gives, in charge to feeding by Doctrine onely, which yet they doe, when they say, that *they were willed by Paul to feed that flock, by Doctrine as he had done.* For 1. its wel known, that as in *Homers*, so in Scripture language, ποιμὼ and ποιμαίνειν hold forth feeding by ruling, as well as teaching, *Mat.* 2. 6. 2. *Paul* fed them by ruling as well as teaching, and so must they, if they must doe as he had done. 3. Some expressions both in *Act.* 20. and *Rev.* 2. concerne Government as well as Doctrine: And if our Brethren cannot deny, but both belonged to those Elders, which the Apostle there spake to; what reason is there, that when he exhorted them to their duty, he should be thought to exhort them to one part of it, and say nothing to the other, especially when the word and expression he useth, doe in their true signification reach both?

3. But the true reason why our Brethren do here single out teaching, and leave out ruling; is, because that would best fit their present argument, which in brief is this. At *Ephesus*, its evident there was then but one Congregation, because but one flock. *Act.* 20. 28. and that in reference to feeding Elders or Pastors, and Pastors are onely of one Congregation,

gregation, to which we reply and ſay: that

1. Our *Brethren* here, and elſewhere in this paper, uſe too confident expreſſions: Here, *its evident*; a little before, *its apparent*; and a little after, *no reaſon can be given*; and againe, *plainly point at*, &c. which we humbly convince, is nor ſo, nor ſo. And if this they here ſay, that all *Beleevers* in *Epheſus*, *might and did meet in one*, be not made more *evident* then that (as they before ſaid) it was *apparent* that there were but about 12. Believers when *Paul* came firſt to *Epheſus*, *Act.* 19.7. in which they hold out that to be his firſt comming, we hope we ſhall not be convicted by ſuch evidences.

2. Should we ſay, that by an *enallage numeri* flock is put for flocks, as there is nothing in that place (we conceive) that croſſeth it, ſo many inſtances thereof, in other Scriptures may juſtifie it.

3. But take it (as it is) in the ſingular number, flock, yet why may it not be taken *collectivè* for ſuch a flock, as contained in it, diverſe particular flocks, as we read expreſly, *Gen.* 33. 13. *Jacob* ſaith of his, *The flockes are with me, and if men ſhould over-drive them one day, all the flock would dye:* Here is a full parallel to *Lukes* πασῖ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ὲ τῶν ὰρνίων, all the flock in the ſingular, is ſaid to have ſeverall particular flocks, as parts of it. And ſo Chriſts *little flock*, and *one fold*, μικρὸν ποίμνιον, *Luke* 12.32. and that μία ποίμνη *John* 10.16. though both in the ſingular number, and ſo expreſſing one flock and fold in generall, namely the Church Catholick; yet comprehendeth many particular flocks and Churches contained in it, and under it, as we have in our former anſwers ſhewn, there were many particular Congregations, in *Jeruſalem*, and yet it but one Church, and governed by one common Presbytery.

4. Whereas upon occaſion of the word *feed*, the word *Paſtor* is urged, *Elders being Paſtors to one onely Congregation*; we anſwer, that the word *Paſtor* is not in the Text, but onely the word *feed*, and that, we have already ſhewn, reacheth to governing as well as teaching, and therefore that although uſe hath obtained, that the word *Paſtor* is commonly taken for the Miniſter of one Congregation, (the Biſhop having injuriouſly appropriated that title to himſelfe, and to his ſingle inſpection over many Congregations) yet according to that ſignification of the word (as it relates to Government) there is no inconveniency, that many Elders aſſociated for Government, may be *eatenùs*, called *Paſtors* of the many Congregations that are under their joynt inſpection.

But whereas it was ſaid in the *Aſſembly*, that that feeding of the flock (eſpecially as it related to teaching) was to be underſtood *partitivè*, *viz.* ſome one Congregation, ſome another, and ſo amongſt them the flock was fed.

Our *Brethren* object,

"That if it be understood *partitivè* with reference to their feeding,
"it must be also with reference to their overseeing, because it
"is so expresst in the Text, *Take heed to your selves, and to the whole*
"*flocke, over which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the*
"*Flock of God:* For no reason can be given why these words, *feed*
"*the flock*; should be understood *partitivè*, and not these other
"words, *Take heed to the flocke, over which the holy Ghost hath made*
"*you overseers*; and if their overseeing and ruling be to be under-
"stood *partitivè*, then how doth this place argue a Presbyteri-
"all Government over many Congregations? And if it be said
"the many Congregations were not fixt; then that distinction
"of *feeding partitivè* falleth to the ground.

1. We doe not say, that those many Congregations were not fixt, but rather hold that they were, as not conceiving how *Pauls* long residence there should not form them into such a more orderly settlement, that so they might feed their severall flocks *partitivè*, as in the *Assembly* was said they did.

2. Whereas our *Brethren* doe here seeme to make these two words, ἐπισκόπους and ποιμαίνειν, to signifie the two distinct parts of a Pastors duty; the first his ruling, and the latter by feeding and teaching; its to be conceived rather, that all these three words in the Text, ἐπισκόπους, προσέχειν and ποιμαίνειν have all of them reference both to their ruling and teaching, for in both, they ought ἐπισκοπεῖν, προσέχειν, and ποιμαίνειν, to oversee, take heed, and feed.

3. Suppose then, that ποιμαίνειν or feeding, doth containe the exercise of all their duty, as they are ἐπίσκοποι, or overseers: yet its not necessary, that the feeding in the severall branches or offices of it, should in the same manner be executed. As suppose (for example) the King should charge the Justices of the Peace in a whole County, being convened, that they carefully governe and doe Justice, to the People committed to their charge; their power and office being such, as its known to be, must needs be conceived, that for that part of it, in taking examinations, binding over to the Sessions, and the like; he meaneth they should doe it *divisim*, within their severall precincts: But for that other part of executing of justice on persons so bound over, indicted and arraigned, they should doe it *Conjunctim, in Conclavi*, at the Sessions or Assizes, and so the like here.

4. But suppose, (according to our *Brethrens* sense) this over-sight and feeding, should expresse the two distinct parts of their office, the one their ruling, the other their teaching; yet such manner of joyning them

them together as we finde in the Text, doth not imply that they ſhould both be exerciſed the ſame manner and way, it being uſuall in Scripture, to ſpeak of things put together indifferently and alike, which yet are to be conſidered differently according to their diverſe capacities, and ſo though theſe two be thus joyned together, yet the one may be *diviſim*, and the other *conjunctim*: As ſuppoſe in a like manner of ſpeech, it ſhould be ſaid to the Miniſters of one Congregation, being many, *Take heed to the flocke, over which God hath made you overſeers, that you preach the Word to them*; and take that word *Overſeers*, as our *Brethren* doe, for their ruling power, that (they will ſay) muſt be exerciſed *conjunctim*, and yet this preaching they will not deny, but muſt be done *diviſim* and *partitivè*.

5. Whence it appeareth, that in caſe overſeeing be taken for ruling, and feeding for teaching, this may be a ſufficient reaſon, why theſe words *feed the flock* ſhould be underſtood *partitivè*, and not that other word *overſeeing*; the one being (as by us both is granted) to be performed *conjunctim*, and the other *diviſim*, though our *Brethren* too confidently ſay no *reaſon can be given of it*, which yet it ſeemeth they afterwards ſuſpected might. And therefore in the latter end of their paper, they ſuggeſt this very reaſon to themſelves, to which they there frame this Anſwer, which we doe here inſert as comming in moſt fitly in this place. Their Anſwer is this:

"That although Elders of a Congregation, though they doe it *in Col-*
"*legio*, and when they teach they doe it *ſeverally*, yet both ruling
"and teaching are to be within the ſame compaſſe, in reſpect of
"them who are to be ruled and taught, &c. for when Elders rule
"one Congregation *in Collegio*, yet each of thoſe Elders overſees
"and rules the whole flock, as truly as he can be ſaid by teaching
"to feed that whole flock.

And ſo they make account it will make nothing for a Presbyteriall joynt ruling of them in a Claſſis, whom they doe not teach in a Congregation: To which our Anſwer is, that to this we have already anſwered in our Anſwers to their former Reaſons, now with the Honourable Houſes, in which we deale with that commenſuration of ruling and teaching, which they there pleaded for; to which (that we may not *actum agere*) we refer them, and therefore ſay nothing more here to that Paragraph, and onely adde to this in hand.

6. That whereas towards the cloſe of it, they aske, *How doth this place (of the Acts) argue a Presbyteriall Government over many Congregations, if this overſeeing and ruling be to be underſtood partitivè?* We anſwer, that Presbyteriall Government ſtands as well with *partitive*

governing, as *partitive* teaching, though not confined to it, for it grants the Elders a particular intereſt in their ſeverall Congregations, by vertue of which they there govern *partitivè*, viz. as to the Elders of other Congregations who have not there that particular intereſt and power: though that hindreth not, but that they may govern both them and the other Congregation *conjunctim* with thoſe other Elders in an Aſſociation, which is our Presbyteriall Government.

That of their Paper which remaines, is their Anſwer to what was ſaid in the *Aſſembly*, viz. that that feeding *Acts* 20. 28. might be underſtood *partitivè*, becauſe the ſame phraſe uſed 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. *(feed the flock of God among you, taking the overſight thereof)* muſt be underſtood *partitivè*, becauſe thoſe Elders and beleevers to whom the Apoſtle *Peter* wrote, were ſcattered through *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia*, and *Bythinia*, which could not all meet in one Congregation, to which they give this anſwer,

" 1. That in this place of *Peter* there are no ſuch words, whereby the
" relation of the whole flock is equally carried to all thoſe *Elders*, as
" there are in that ſpeech of the Apoſtle to the Elders of *Epheſus*,
" *Acts* 20. 28. *Take heed to the whole flock over which* (whole flock)
" *the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers.*

" 2. In this 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2. there are words which plainly point at ſuch
" a diſtribution, namely ἐν ὑμῖν *among you*, applied both to the El-
" ders and the flock. The *Elders* ἐν ὑμῖν *amongſt you I exhort, feed*
" *the flock*, ὃν ὑμῖν, that is, each Elders *feed the flock reſpectively*,
" where ere they are among you in each Country.

" Therefore though it be underſtood *partitivè* in *Peter*, yet it follows
" not it ſhould be ſo underſtood, *Acts* 20. 28.

To which firſt in generall we anſwer.

1. That when it was ſaid in the *Aſſembly* that that *feeding the flock Acts* 20. 28. might be underſtood *partitivè*, it was ſaid in reference to their feeding by teaching, and ſpecially their ordinary fixt teaching in thoſe ſeverall fixt congregations, and ſo it was *partitivè*: but by ſo ſaying we never meant that it was ſimply and only *partitivè*, as *feeding* contained all their office and duty in ruling as well as teaching, for ſo it might be, and was *conjunctim*, as of the Elders of a Congregation in their Conſiſtory, ſo of aſſociated Elders in a Claſſicall Presbytery. We dare not goe in this ſenſe againſt the *conjunctim* in the *Acts*, nor the *partitivè* in *Peter*, which we averred, and therefore our *Brethren* need not have taken ſo much paines to prove; But we are for both in both places, that as in both places they did feed by teaching ſeverally, in their ſeverall Congregations, ſo they fed by ruling jointly in their united reſpective

ſpective Aſſociations, ſo far as that διασπορὰ in *Peter* would admit. So that theſe two places, which our *Brethren* ſet at ſuch an ods, may for all this very well agree.

2. And eſpecially if we looke into the expreſſions of both places, they ſeeme to looke very like Parallels, and ſo Interpreters make them, θέλο ἐπισκόπως ποιμάνειν in *Acts* to ποιμάνετε ἐπισκοποῦντες in *Peter*, and there a ποίμνιον in both places to be overſeen and fed, and for *Gods Church* in the one place, there is *Gods heritage* in the other, though we muſt not diſſemble, that the word is τῶν κλήρων, in the *plural* number, which ſome expound of particular Congregations, which hath a ſhew of a better proof for the underſtanding of this of *Peter partitivè* (which as even now we ſaid, we deny not, but alleadge it for) then our *Brethrens* criticiſme of ἐν ὑμῖν, as we ſhall ſee when we come to it by and by. How ever, the places are ſo Parallel, that from a *muſt be* in the one, we may rationally infer at leaſt a *may be* in the other. But our *Brethren* ſay no, in regard of the difference which they obſerve between thoſe two places.

1. For firſt, they ſay that in *the place of* Peter, *there are no ſuch words, whereby the relation of the whole flock is equally carryed to all thoſe Elders, as there are in the place of* Acts, *Take heed to the whole flock, over which* [whole flock] *the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers.*

We anſwer, 1. What ever the ſenſe is, or the thing was, yet conſider whether the words in the place of the *Acts*, which our *Brethren* inſiſt upon, do neceſſarily hold forth the relation of the whole *flock*, and that equally carried to all theſe Elders as our *Brethren* affirme, for the word is not ὅλῳ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, which anſwers to our *Brethrens* Tranſlation of it, *the whole flock*; which, to lay more weight on it, they repeat the ſecond time, and put in a Parentheſis, the more to be taken notice of, but its παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, and that word, παντὶ, we doubt not, but they know, doth not alwayes neceſſarily infer a collective ſenſe, that it muſt needs be read ALL *the flock* as our Tranſlators render it, or the *whole flock*, as our *Brethren* would. But that its taken oft-times diſtributively, as πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν *Mat.* 4. 23. 9. 35. & πᾶσαν ἡμέραν *Acts* 5. 42. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 18. and ſo if it be read to every flock, over which the holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers, its taken *partitivè*, and ſo all of them ſpoken together to feed their ſeverall flocks in their ſeverall diviſions. And where's then that collective whole that our *Brethren* make account muſt neceſſarily be hence inferred? Suppoſe this ſhould have been the meaning of *Paul*, to have ſaid, I charge you all *that you take heed to every flock*, which ſeverally God hath given you the overſight of: we ask whether that very ſenſe might not have been

expreſſed in theſe very words προσέχετε παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ὑμᾶς ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους.

Or if it be ſaid, it ſhould then have been παντὶ ποιμνίῳ, without the *Article* τῷ, which makes it *collective*, and not *diſtributive*.

We ſay, its not ſo neceſſarily nor alwayes, eſpecially when this τὸ, is anſwered by the *Relative* ἐν ᾧ following: the Article, is without this obſervation ſometimes left out, when the ſenſe is collective, as 1 *Pet.* 1. 24. Nay in one clauſe left out, and in another taken in, in the ſame ſentence, and when ſpoken in the ſame ſenſe πάσῃ τῇ μνείᾳ, καὶ πάσῃ δεήσει, *Phil.* 1. 3.

For the *equall carrying of the relation of the whole flock to all thoſe Elders* which they mention, its nothing for them nor againſt us. For we ſay that the Elders in a Claſſis have an equall relation to *the whole flock* in their Aſſociation, as the Elders in a Conſiſtory have to all *the flock* in their Congregation, and beſide ſuch a ſpeech as that in *Acts to feed the flocke*, may be made to ſuch as in any meaſure or degree have an intereſt in the *feeding of their flock*, to wit, in their ſeverall capacities, yea though they ſhould not be equall.

2. Conſider whether that be true, which they ſay that there is no ſuch word in that place of *Peter*, whereby the relation of *the whole flock* is equally carried to all thoſe Elders which be ſpoken to, and here we ſay,

1. If there be no word in *Peter* that expreſſeth that παντὶ which was in the *Acts*, yet it is neceſſarily to be underſtood when he ſaith ποιμάνατε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον, he meanes πᾶν τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον, *feed the flock of God among you, i. e.* all (or the whole) *flock of God among you*, unleſſe he would give leave that ſome part of the flock ſhould be left unfed. Nay therefore

2. Theſe words τὸ ἐν ὑμιν ποίμνιον do hold out and expreſſe *the whole flock*, for ſome of the flock, or part of the flock, is not in propriety of ſpeech, but by a Trope, the flock.

2. But they ſay poſitively that in *Peter there are words which plainly point out ſuch a diſtributive, viz. that* ἐν ὑμῖν *applied both* to Elders *and flock: and ſo he exhorts each Elders to feed the flock reſpectively, where they are among them in each* Country.

1. Then by their own interpretation, if it be underſtood *partitivè*, yet not *partitivè* of ſeverall Congregations, and what then have they gained? But *partitivè* of each Country, as they ſpeak, and that will hold out Claſſicall, Synodicall, Provinciall or Nationall partitions, and ſo we may rather gain ſomething by that bargaine.

2. That pointing out ſuch a diſtribution by that double ἐν ὑμῖν, is not ſo plaine either to us, or in it ſelfe, as our *Brethren* would make it.

1. If

1. If we compare it with that place of the *Acts* in which they ſay there is no ſuch thing, & therfore, not *plainly pointed out*, and yet let indifferent readers judge whether τὸ περισσοτέρως ἐν ὑμῖν in *Peter* do more plainly point out a diſtribution, then περισσοτέρως ἐκκλησίας *Acts* 20. 17. eſpecially as our *Brethren* interpret that for one Congregationall Church. Or whether τὸ ποίμνιον ἐν ὑμῖν *the flock of God amongſt you*, be more diſtributive, or rather not all one, as to this purpoſe, with τῷ ποιμνίῳ ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους *over which the holy Ghoſt made you overſeers*, and this the rather,

2. If we conſider that phraſe ἐν ὑμῖν ſingly by it ſelfe, in which we can find no ground of our *Brethrens* Criticiſme that it ſhould ſo plainly point out ſuch a diſtribution as they plead for, for it plainly points out what it plainly ſignifies, and that is, *in you* or *among you*, and let all judge whether ſuch an expreſſion then, may not be uſed.

1. Where there is no ſuch diſtribution as our *Brethren* mean, namely, into ſeverall Congregations. For it may be ſaid of one individuall Congregation. As ſuppoſe in *Yarmouth*, where but one Congregation, and there divers Elders, a Miniſter from ſome other parts may properly write. *I exhort the Elders* ἐν ὑμῖν *to feed that flock of God*, ἐν ὑμῖν.

2. Where there are ſuch diſtributions, but as collectively knit together in a joynt aſſociation and Government: as in caſe one ſhould have ſaid to the *Sanhedrim* at *Jeruſalem*, ποιμαίνέτε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον, it had been a moſt proper and ſenſible ſpeech, for they did ποιμαίνειν τὸ ἐν αὐλοῖς ποίμνιον, all the ſeverall diviſions in *Jeruſalem*, yea of all *Iſrael* appearing to them: and yet its well known they never governed *partitivè* but *conjunctim* as an higheſt Nationall Synod or Aſſembly.

And thus far in Anſwer to what our *Brethren* have ſaid againſt the firſt Propoſition of our argument, for many Congregations under one Presbyteriall Government, *viz.* that the multitude of beleevers there, did make more Congregations then one. Our *Brethren* adde in the cloſe of all.

As for the ſecond and third, that there were many Elders over that people as one flocke, and one Church, and that they did govern this one flock, the former propoſition not being proved, they make nothing to the proof of that concluſion, &c.

To which we ſay onely two things.

1. That if the former Propoſition (of more beleevers at *Epheſus* then could meet in one Congregation) had not been proved, yet this ſecond of many more Elders being there then could have been imployed in one Congregation, might of it ſelf have made ſomething to the proof

proof of the conclusion, of many Congregations under one Presbyteriall Government.

For those many Elders might have argued severall Congregations which they might have been divided into, for convenience of habitation, and for preventing of many and great inconveniences in that Idolatrous and heathenish City, and those times of Persecution, which might possibly, nay probably have come to passe, if they had all met in one place, though they had been no more, then might have possibly met altogether in one Congregation.

2. But what if that proposition hath been proved, and our *Brethrens* objections against it answered, as (we hope they are) then it joyned with the other two following propositions might make enough for the proof of the maine conclusion: *That many Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.*

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

ARGU

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OF THE

DISSENTING BRETHREN

AGAINST THE

SUBORDINATION

OF

STANDING SYNODS,

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{NATIONALL,
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LONDON,
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Propositions of the *Assembly*, concerning SYNODS.

1. *The Scripture doth hold out another sort of Assemblies for the Government of the Church, besides Classicall and Congregationall, which we call Synodicall*, Act. 15.
2. *Synodicall Assemblies may lawfully be of severall sorts: as* Provinciall, Nationall, *and* Oecumenicall.
3. *It is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God, that there be a Subordination of* Congregationall, Classicall, Provinciall, *and* Nationall *Assemblies: that so appeales may be made from the inferiour to the superiour, respectively. Proved from* Mat. 18. *which holding forth the Subordination of an offending Brother, to a particular Church, it doth also, by a parity of reason hold forth the Subordination of a Congregation to superiour Assemblies.*

And it is agreeable to the light of nature, that he who is wronged, and deprived of his right by one power, should have recourse to another power, which may restore unto him his right againe, and rescind the sentence, by which he was wronged: else there would be no powerfull remedy provided to remove wrong, and to preserve right.

To the latter Proposition about the Subordinations of Synods, the dissenting Brethren entred their dissent, after the debate, and their REASONS in writing, as followeth.

ARGUMENTS OF THE DISSENTING BRETHREN,

Against the Subordination of Synods, &c.

ALthough we judge Synods to be of great use, for the finding out, and declaring of Truth in difficult cases, and encouragement to walk in the Truth; For the healing offences; and to give advice unto the Magistrate, in matters of Religion: And although we give great honour and conscientious respect, unto their determinations. Yet seeing the *Proposition* holds forth, Not onely an Occasionall, but a *standing* use of them; and that in *Subordination* of one unto another, as *Juridicall, Ecclesiasticall Courts*; and this in all cases: we humbly present these REASONS against it.

First Argument.

ALL such subordinations of Courts, having greater and lesser degrees of power, to which in their order, Causes are to be brought, *must have the greatest and most expresse warrant* and designment for them in the word. Whence it is argued thus.

These Courts that must have the most expresse Warrant and Designment for them in the word, and have not; their power is to be suspected, and not erected in the Church of God.

But these ought to have so: and have not.

Therefore, &c.

The *first Part* of the *Minor* is thus proved.

There ought to be the greatest and most expresse warrant, and that for *two things* belonging to them. *First,* for their SUBORDINATION & NUMBER. Secondly, for their BOUNDS and limits of POWER. And because *this principle* is made use of, both in the point in hand, and other

of like nature, *viz. to argue, à pari ratione,* from LIKE and parallel REASON, the argument to establish *this* Proposition, shall proceed accordingly, from the strength of *like reason in other cases & instances:* THAT THERE OUGHT TO BE A WARRANT AND DESIGNMENT FOR THEM IN THE WORD.

1. From like reason in the *case of subordination of Officers in the Church,* one over another: there was a speciall institution, and it is required, or we owne them not; and that for *intensive* power, and *extensive* power: and *therefore* for the *subordination* of such *Courts* also. The Rule of Proportion holds: For a *Government* of and by *severall subordinations,* whether of *one* Church officer or *person* over another, and of him over others, or of *a many* in the like degree of subordination, are but *severall forms of Government, of which there is the like reason in common;* As of Subordinations in a *Monarchicall* way, wherein still but some *one* person is superiour to another downwards; or in an *Aristocraticall* way throughout, in this they come all to one, that if there be to be, *an institution* of warrant *for the one,* there is to be for the *other;* whether *God* or *men* be to be the *Institutors* of them. Now in the government of the Church, *for the subordination of* OFFICERS, there was an *expresse Institution,* or men ought not to have assumed it. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath set in his Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets and Evangelists* (who were of a parallel order) *thirdly Teachers:* and the difference of power in *Apostles* and *Evangelists* is by subordination; *But Christ hath not set the like subordination of* COURTS.

2 *It is proved from what the Presbyteriall principles themselves reject.* An institution is required by them in the case of subordination of *Bishops, Archbishops, Popes,* in their arguing against them and their power. Yea and by the Episcopall Writers themselves, who when it is objected, that if there may be a *Bishop,* and an *Archbishop* over him, why not a *Patriarch* over Archbishops, and a *Pope* over all? They deny this, and reject a *Patriarch* or *Pope* (although with renouncing of infallibility) as not warranted by the word. They say an higher and more universall subordination, alters the case. And the usuall exception against this subordination of Church governours is, that in Scripture we read neither of the *name* of an *Archbishop,* nor the *thing;* and therefore *no* of a *subordination* of them. The *like* may be said of *these,* where read we of *Councels Provinciall, Nationall, names or things?* Yea, and in this way of arguing (in this respect) the *disadvantage* is on this side rather: for we are *sure* that *once* there was in the Church, *such a subordination* in Church officers, *Evangelists* over Pastors, *Apostles* over Evangelists (only they were extraordinary, and so no patterns) but of *such a subordi-*

nation

...sion of Councels in an *Aristocraticall way*, there is nothing to be found.

3. It is argued from *like* and just *reason* in *other societies*, and *bodies politick*. In all Kingdomes and Common-wealths well ordered and constituted, there is and ought to be a set and expresse order by the Lawes, both of the *number* and *bounds* of *Courts* of *Judicatory*, from whom and to whom *Appeals* are made, and in what cases &c. And that this subordination should be set forth and fixed by the Law, is as necessary, as the Lawes or rules by which men in a Kingdome are to be governed. The wisdome of the Law doth judge it not enough to appoint *severall sorts of Officers*, as to say *Councellors*, *Sergeants*, *Judges*; but designeth also and appoints *severall Courts* with their *power* and *bounds*; The designment of which, especially *of standing Courts*, (being made up of these) is a matter of much more moment then the other. Yea and still the *greater* and *higher such Courts* and *Assemblies* are, having amplitude of power over others, the *more expresse* evidence and warrant for their power there *is*, and *ought* to be: as for *Parliamentary power*, and the priviledges thereof.

And this is evident, as from the examples of all Kingdomes, so from what *the Scripture* speakes of the *constitution* of them; each part of the subordination of such power in all Government, both is, and also is called a *Creation of men*, in things humane, whether it be in a *Monarchicall* or *Aristocraticall* way, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. *Submit your selves to every humane creation, διὰ τὸν κύριον, &c.* and he speakes there evidently of (and therefore thus stileth) the subordination of powers in a Common-wealth, whether *Officers or Courts*: for it follows, *whether unto the King as Supreme, or unto Governours, as those that are sent by him, &c.* and so here subordination of power *under him*. Now parallel, *spirituall* and *Ecclesiasticall* government with this. *As* in the reating an humane fabrick and contignation of power, There must be an *ordinance*, or *creation* from *men*, when God hath left the framing of it unto him (as in this case he hath) So this subordination, being in *Divine power*, there must be a *Divine institution* for it, *besides* that of the *distinction* of the *offices* themselves.

4. It is argued from *like reason with Christs institution*, Mat. 18. If in a particular Church, Christ hath prescribed the *severall subordinations* of proceedings, and set forth the *degrees*, *bounds* and *order* of them; then much more it is required in these; by how much a *larger extent of power* is committed to them. The *first* rule in *Mat.* 18. is, *If thy brother offend thee, tell him thy selfe*; then 2. *Take two or three, and if he hear not them*, then 3. *Tell the Church*. If there were a thousand brethren in a

Congregation, a man were *not bound*, nor were it *orderly*, in an ordi
and set way, to take, as the Church shall please, *first* two or three, a
then ten, and *then* twenty, and *still* the like proportion of a *great*
number, ere he comes to the Church it selfe: but *Christ* hath *set* the *o*
der, and his wisedome saw it meet, thus to designe and limit the proce
dings in a particular Church; And it had been much *more necessary* t
have appointed the like, about these *generall* and *greater Assemblies*
because every one of these Courts (intended) have the power of a *fi*
nence and *judgement*, whereas these *two* or *three* proceed but in a w
of *admonitions*, in *order to a superiour Court*. Shall Christ take care fo
Congregations (which are esteemed the meanest) and not for these? O
which, if Christ should not have set the bounds of power and subordina
tion thereof, *none would know what belongs to them*; *who* is in *fault*, if o
fences be not corrected; nor would any know *whom first to appeale unt*
I will appeale unto the *Nationall* Assembly first, *saies one*, and am n
bound to the *Classicall* or *Provinciall*; *Another would* say, I will appea
to a *Generall* Councell, which can best judge, and will be sure to make
end of it. Why should any be hindered for going *Per saltum*, if Chri
hath not set forth, and obliged us to these subordinations, in their o
der?

5. In the *Church of the Jewes*: The *subordinations* that were, were *fi*
forth and determined by *Institution or example*; *how many* Courts there
should be, and *where* to rest: There were the *Courts* of the *Citie*, m
the *Tribes*; and *then* their *Sanedrin*, to which the case was to be carri
if it were too hard for their particular Courts: and *no other Courts*, b
twixt, appointed. *Deut.* 17. In the new Testament we have for rem
ving scandals, a *Congregationall standing Court* and government (or b
it a Classicall standing Presbytery over many Congregations as our *Br*
thren say) and we have an example also of going out from a particul
standing Church, (whether the one or the other) elsewhere, to another
Church or Churches, when divisions are therein (which *Acts* 15. bot
forth) but still, for *such standing subordinations* and Courts as these,
of the Church, *nothing at all*. If there had been any *Nationall Synod*
a set and constant Judicatory, then Christ would have appointed it
as he had done before; BUT HE HATH NOT; no example, no Institu
tion he lls it forth. Which is

The *second part* of the *Minor* Proposition.

Thus proved.

1. The *new Testament is silent in it*. And if it be said, that all N
tions were not then converted, when the Apostles wrote. It is *answered*
that

God in the old Testament tooke care to set the order *aforehand*, when they had *no Cities*, nor were setled in the land. And accordingly the Apostles had not lived to see that which might occasion such an institution or precepe, yet they would some way have left order, for time to come.

But 2. though the Apostles lived to see, many famous particular Churches erected *in a Province*, as well as in Cities; in a *Nation*, as in *Judea*; in *Asia*, in *Creete*, there were many Cities and Churches in each: and although all the people in these Countries were not Christians, nor members of Churches, yet there was matter for the moulding and casting them into these subordinations, as well as now in *France*, where not the third part are Protestants, or in the *Low-countries*, where not the tenth part of the inhabitants are members of their Churches. And sure if these superstructions had been so absolutely necessary in the Government of the Churches, it had been as necessary to have appointed them. They set up and appointed all needfull remedies for ordering the Churches after them, when they should be gone. And 'tis *more strange*, that in the case of the spreading of errours, they should not *write to Churches so gathered into Synods*, and as having the standing power to prevent and suppresse them (if such ordinary standing Assemblies armed with coercive power had been then, in that existence, as now) that, upon no occasion, this should be done, when yet they had occasions. Take the seven Churches in *Asia*, *Ephesus*, *Thyatira*, *Smyrna*, &c. with the rest of the Churches therein, a PROVINCE, and though therein we finde many great disorders, and some in *Doctrine* (the more *proper* work of these standing Synods) yet we see that Christ writes, onely, *to each of* those Churches *apart*, and reproves *each*, for their disorder, in *each*: whereas had they been *one Church*, in such a standing association for government, and had had ordinary *Provinciall* and *Nationall* Assemblies then, as now, the reproof would have been especially directed thereto. As if errours and disorders were in the *Classicall Churches* (as those all are pretended to be) *of Scotland*, the chief rebuke would now more justly fall upon the *Nationall* and *Provincicall* Assemblies, as their constitution is.

Yea thirdly, the holy Ghost would have at least vouchsafed to these, or some other Churches (that were in like manner, in a *Nation*, or *Province*, as *Galatia*, &c.) in respect of such a combination, the name of *Church*, who must (according to the principles of this government) have had *so much of the power of a Church*. But no where are the *Churches in a Province*, called *a Church*, but *Churches* in the plurall: And if the lesser Churches, *then* these, yea *rather these*, having *most* of the *power*,

should therefore have had *most* of the *name*; Yea, and by how much the *Church power* thereof, should have been *most independent* (as a Nation is) and so come, most eminently, within that rule, *Tell the Church* (from which words these pretend their power, and yet cannot shew so much title thereto, as to have *the name Church* given them) Let a rationall account be given of this.

Second Argument.

If there be such a Subordination of Synods in the Church of Christ, then there is no Independency but in an OECUMENICALL COUNCELL.

Which first, Would bring in a *forraigne Ecclesiasticall power* over each State and Kingdome.

And secondly; Therefore of all other should have *its designation* and existence, in the *Word*; and is more needfull, then the other *two sorts* of Synods mentioned: For *if any* should be extant, *then that*, which is REMEDIUM EFFICACISSIMUM. Tis said, there is wanting *Remedium efficax*, if these subordinations be not; but according to these principles there is wanting *that*, which is the *most efficacious* remedy, if a *Generall Councell* be not extant in the world. For if there be not a rellig in a Classicall Presbytery, *but Provinciall* also must be, and appealed to; neither are *they* reckoned efficacious enough, *but there* must be *National* also, (upon this supposition, that the greater Assembly hath more of the promise and assistance of Christ than the lesser) then of *all other* GENERALL COUNCELL must be supposed in a transcendent manner, above all the rest, to have the promise of assistance made to it; and so to be the most eminently efficacious, (if not the *onely remedy*) on earth, yea and *onely* to be *rested in*, being that which *onely* is the *ultimate*. Some of the *Papists* they gave this to such a *Generall Councell* that it *cannot erre*, but according to these principles of Presbyteriall Divines, though it might *erre*, yet it is supposeable to be transcendantly more infallible then *all* the other *under* it; & God more with it then with all the rest: And *therefore* God in his word would have given especially order for this, above all other. And the same God that suits his *providences* to his *institutions*, would not have failed in what is the *most soveraign remedie* of all other, that it might have been existent in all ages: as we see his *promise* was to the *Jewes*, to *keep their Land*, when the males thrice a year, went up to the *Generall Assembly* at *Jerusalem*. But 300. years the Churches wanted them, and could not enjoy them; and they were judged therefore *not necessary* to the government of the Church, which yet (according to these principles) must have been the *most necessary* of all the rest.

Yea,

Yea, and further also, Thirdly, there must *be an injurious Independency set up in a Nationall Synod*: for when a man hath appealed from one Court to another, and comes to this *Nationall*, that is the Ultimate existent; and upon the sentence thereof, *comes next to be banisht out of a Nation, to have his estate forfeited, to the ruine of himself and posterity*: *Then* it is, that he *most of all needs* the relief of an *higher Remedy*, more efficacious than all these, he hath gone through, *if such an one may be*; Yet then he is left remedilesse, and he (according unto these Principles) left more unsatisfied then ever; because thinks he, there is by Gods appointment, a *Court* that hath *more of God* and of Christ in it, *than all these*, to judge of the Truth and Right, and Love It Is Not; and can never be expected.

Let it be withall considered, that *when* God appointed a *Subordination of standing Courts*; he withall designed out, *which* should be the *Supreame*, and made it the *Ultimate*; and the Supreamacy, and *Independency* of it, in a *set* and *standing* way, was his *institution*, *as much as the appointment of the Court it selfe*: So that *he* was to be *put to death*, *that* opposed *the sentence of it*, and all Appeales were thereby cut off. *Therefore* if a *Nationall* Church doth take upon it, to be an *Independent Church*, upon the sentence thereof, to have the *extreamest punishment* executed, (but that of death) that *in a Nation* men are capable of; it had need, for the quieting of all mens Spirits that must submit to it; not onely shew a *warrant* from God, for it to be an *Ecclesiasticall Judicatory*, but also to be the *Supreame Court*, as the *Sanedrim* was, *that* Appeals should be made to.

Third Argument.

To that end, let it be examined, *what set rules there is, or may be supposed to be of these subordinations, and their bounds; and the Ultimate Independency in a Nationall Church*: which should be fetcht from some *standing considerations*, which the word warrants; God never having *constituted a Church*, but he gave the *bounds thereof*. All variation of Church power is from God: The alteration of the government of his people the Jewes from *family* government (which had been *under* the *Law of Nature*) to *Nationall* in *Moses* his time, was by expresse appointment: And *as* himself made and constituted it a *Nationall* Church, *so* there was an *Ecclesiasticall government* framed by himself suited thereunto. And in the New Testament there is a *Reed to measure the Temple*. *Revel.* 11. 1. *A rule* to set out the *limits* of Church power, as well as under the old; and therefore the argument is framed thus.

That Church-power which cannot shew a constant, Divine rule for its variation, and subordination, and Ultimate Independency, is not of God, and so may not be.

But this variation of Church-power into these subordinations, cannot shew any such steady and constant rule for these things. Therefore, &c.

The *Major* is evident from what hath been said.

The *Minor* is made good by a *remarkall* of all particulars, that may be supposed to be the *square* of framing these *subordinations*, &c.

I. 1. Not that rule, *That the greater number or company of Churches should rule the lesse*, and that *the whole should rule the part*. For then,

1. There would be as *many* severall *subordinations* as there can be supposed *variations of greater numbers*; and that will arise to more than these three onely; Every new greater company would constitute a new Synod.

2. Where is the promise of God, that he will be more with the greatest part of them that professe Christianity, rather than with a few, so farre as to constitute a new power and government? Yea,

3. The greater number of Churches professing Religion, are more corrupted; the purer Churches are fewest. It hath been ill for *Philadelphia* and the Angell and Elders thereof, if those seven Churches in *Asia* had been cast into such a subordinate association for government, to be exercised by the Angels and Elders of all the other six Churches, with the rest in *Asia*. And the like may be said of the *purer Reformed Churches in Germany*; if the greater number of those, that yet were true Churches, should have ruled the lesser, then the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* being bound to this government, the *Lutherans* being also true Churches, and the more in number, would by vertue of *this Law*, have soon corrupted the purer. *And what reason can be pretended*, (according to this rule, and the principles of this government) *to leave any true Church out of an association?*

4. Suppose there should be as many Elders, and Churches more purely reformed, in one province, or shire then in the rest of a whole Nation besides, (as instance might be given, in some of the reformed Churches, *that there are*) why should not God be thought to be as much with them, as with the *Nationall Assembly*? And if all are to give themselves up to this law, how will the greater which is the worse, either *corrupt* the purer or *oppress* them?

5. If

5. *If qua greater*; then the decrees of greater, *viz. Generall Councels*, in former ages, ſhould bind us more *then Nationall* or *Provinciall* now: for they ſhould have had more of Church in them, by this rule, and ſo more of Chriſt: And then all *Generall Councels*, that ſet up *Popes* and *Biſhops*, and all other ſuperſtitions, are ſtill binding.

If it be ſaid, *We choſe them not.* Yet ſtill that is not the ground makes their decrees leſſe Divine or obliging to us, but it lieth in the authority of *Gods ordinance*, that they were the *greater* and *more generall Councels.* And how ever ſtill, if this be the rule, that the greater number of Churches rule the leſſe; then take the *meaſure* of this *greatneſſe* and *number* of Churches from *Time*, ſtretching the line over all ages *paſt*, as well as from the *more number* of Churches in ſuch or ſuch a place, or Nations in the *preſent* times; and ſo looke what generall Councels for moſt ages of the world did eſtabliſh, ſhould by vertue of this Law, oblige the preſent times, and have more force upon us, then the *univerſall Church* in this preſent age; much more then of any *Nationall Aſſembly*, if either be ſimply conſidered under a meer Eccleſiaſticall obligation, that is, qua *greater* and *more of Church.* Time varieth not the caſe: ſo:but that all their acts,having been acts,of the *Church univerſall*,in *all ages* ſhould,comparatively,ſtand more in force. The acts of any the laſt general Councels,will ſtand in force,untill a generall Councell of like extent repeale thoſe acts; as the Statutes of Parliament of our Anceſtors do, if not repealed, by like and equall authority.

Secondly, it is *not the notion* or conſideration of their *being Churches in ſuch or ſuch a Nation* or *Province*, that can be the rule of making this obligation or ſetting of theſe bounds.It muſt be conſidered the Queſtion is of a meere Eccleſiaſtique obligation by *vertue of Church principles*, ſuch as ſhould have been a *juſt rule* and meaſure to the *primitive* Churches, (*ere Princes turned Chriſtian*) to have reared up the like ſubordinations. Now then the limits from hence muſt either riſe from being *firſt one Church* in a *Kingdome* under the ſame civill Government; Or ſecondly, *one Church in a Nation*; that is, either from a *Nationall* reſpect or *Politicall.* II.

Firſt in *generall* from neither; For that inſtance, *Acts* 15. of the Councell there, its rife or the bounds of its authority was founded upon neither: For if either *Nationall* or *Politicall* reſpects, ſhould have obliged them, they ſhould have ſent to *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, and not to *Jeruſalem*, who were both under a differing Government civill, and of *another Nation.* III.

But more *particularly.*

First *not* qua *Church in one Kingdome*, for that is *per accidens* to a Church, that it growes up to a Kingdome, or that the whole Nation is converted to Christianity: And therefore a set rule for all times cannot be fetcht from hence; this could not be the *certaine measure* of the Independency of Church power in the Apostles times.

Secondly, this makes the *bounds* of Ecclesiasticall Independency and jurisdiction *uncertaine, varying as the bounds of Kingdomes doe vary.* When the *Romane* Empire, had all Kingdomes under it, all the Churches must *then*, have been obliged to have had *generall standing Councels* suited to the extent of the Empire, to have been the next unto the Provinciall, such as the Nationall are now to the Provinciall; or else before the Empire turned Christian, there was by this rule even as many *independencies as Churches.* And *then againe*, when this Empire was broken into *ten Kingdomes*, yea and many moe, there arose instead of the former, many new Independent boundaries of Church-power (of which only the question is, and not of that power, which a Church doth come to have, and simply and alone holds of the Magistrates, which will be meerly Civill) And then as Kingdomes vary by conquests, the like alteration the bounds of Church power must receive. Among the *Jewes* it did not, for when the Church was broken into *two* Kingdomes by Gods appointment; yet the Church state, by Gods institution, varied not, but was still *one* Church. All these things are therefore meer accidentals to Church power, and how can they be the foundation of the bounds of it?

III. Lastly, if this *Independency* ariseth from the *Magistrates*: Then there is no need of such *subordinations*; which is proved by experience in Reformed Churches abroad; who are well enough governed, without these subordinations. *Geneva* hath *no Appeals*, yet is governed but by *one Classicall Church*: And why may not all other Churches be governed as well without them, if the Magistrate oversees them, and keeps each to their duties? The Churches in the *Low-Countries* want *Nationall Synods*, and yet are peaceably governed; yea, some for a long time are without *provinciall*, and say if they can, they will never have more; and yet are peaceably and quietly governed: *It is as the Civill-Magistrate will terminate the Independency, and himselfe ever-look it.* Or,

IIII. Secondly, if these bounds be fetcht from *Nationall respects*. Then 1. in *Germany*, *Calvinists* must subject to the greater number of *Lutherans*; and in *this* Kingdome, *all* Ministers must make up this association, and the *greater number* will be the worser, and maligne and oppose the good. If because the *Calvinists* professe a further reformation, they are disobliged from associating with the *Lutherans*, then those, in any Nation

ion that professe a further reformation than others, are free by the same Law also. Surely *Uniformity of principles* is a more intimate bond of such association than any such *outward extrinsecall* respects. 2. If *gens Nation*, or principality, then *Wales* must be Independent. 3. *If gens Nation*, then if *nation* be taken for *a people of the same tongue and kindred*, then all the Christian *Jewes* in the primitive times, when scattered into a Nation, were bound to have made one Church distinct from all the Churches they cohabited with: If Nation be taken for a people dwelling in the same *Nationall bounds*, then the same *Jewes* being dispersed into several Countries and Nations, must have made *one Church* with the severall Nations where they lived; whereas *Peter* in his Epistles, and *James* in his, and *Paul* to the *Hebrewes*, write unto the Jewes *apart*, as Churches in all Nations.

Fourth Argument.

That government which necessarily produceth representations of spirituall power, out of other representations, with a derived power therefrom, there is no warrant for.

But these subordinations of Synods, Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall, for the government of the Church, doe so.

The *Major* shall be spoken to, after the MINOR Proposition is both cleared and proved, which is done by putting *two things* together.

First, that if there be an authoritative subordination of all Churches in the *Provinces* to a *Nationall* Assembly, and so of *many Nations* to an *Oecumenicall*, binding unto subjection; that then *all*, in the *Provinces* must be interested in that Nationall, & *all* in the *Nation* in that *Oecumenicall*; so as it may be said, that they are *all involved* and included, and so obliged; as it is in *Parliamentary power*, wherein the *Shires* are involved.

Secondly, that this interest, in this subordination cannot arise, but either by *immediate choice* of those Elders, which shall represent each *Church* and *Congregation immediately*, (which is the case of our Parliament men chosen immediately by those they represent) *or else*, that the *Provinciall Elders*, sent by the Congregations, shall choose out of themselves, some *few*, that shall *represent the Provinces*, and so likewise the *Nationall Assemblies* shall choose out some few, which shall represent the *whole Nation* in a generall Councell. Now the first of these is not, nor can be, in the choice of a Nationall Assembly. Congregations meet not, for any such imediate choice, but the Elders of them, all

chooſe out of themſelves; So as the obligation of all the Churches to be ſubject to a Nationall Aſſembly (ariſing out of thoſe other ſubordinations) is not, becauſe they are a greater number of Elders or Divines, (for in a Provinciall Synod there may be aſſembled as many as in the Nationall) but it ariſeth from hence, that *ſome* out of all, doe represent the reſt: And if they did not meet and Vote, *as repreſenters of the whole*, then when a *Nationall Aſſembly* ſits in a great City, *all* other neighbour Miniſters might come and Vote with them, and out-Vote them, who are the repreſenters of the whole.

Major.

Now that *ſuch a repreſentation having a derived ſpirituall power from other repreſentations, is not* in matters Spirituall, *warrantable.* Beſides, all arguments againſt *delegated power* in matters Spirituall, all Miniſters being immediately *Chriſti Vicarii*: & that all ſuch repreſentations *grow weaker* as reflexions uſe to doe; *Elders* repreſent the *Churches*, in *Claſſicall* and *Provinciall* Aſſemblies, as being imediately choſen by them, but the Elders in *Nationall* Aſſemblies, are the *repreſentations of Elders in Provinces*, and ſo are a *ſhadow of that firſt ſhadow*; whereas yet, they have the *moſt of power*, even all that can be ſuppoſed to belong to *the whole ſubſtance.* Beſides ſuch conſiderations, it is argued thus.

1. If theſe *few* out of *Nations*, in a generall Councell ſhould bind all thoſe Nations in matters ſpirituall, and a *few* out of Provinces the Nation, they muſt be ſuppoſed to have *the promiſe*, and an *aſſiſtance unfrustrable.* But where is either the promiſe, or can gifts in a few be ſuppoſed to produce ſuch an obligation? Tis true, where *two* or *three* are gathered together, His *promiſe is to be in the midſt of them*, and ſo ſuppoſe with more, when more are met; But that his promiſe ſhould be, to be with a *few* out of a Nation, as with *the whole Nation*; and thoſe not choſen *immediately* by the Nation, and *but* the *Repreſenters* of them, cannot be expected. Tis granted, that each ſo met, hath the *gifts* and aſſiſtance of an *Elder*, and ſo the whole *as of ſo many Elders*, met (as we in *this Aſſembly*, met together, are to be looked upon, and the judgement thereof accordingly reverenced) but that as they are Elders *repreſentative of hundreds of other Elders*, who *themſelves are Repreſenters of Churches*, that any ſuch addition ſhould ariſe to them, by virtue of this *duplicated* repreſentation, over and above what is in their ſingle gifts and office, *Let either a warrant be produced or a promiſe.* Two things are *allowed* them, but a *third* denyed them. Firſt, it is granted, they may have aſſiſtance to judge *as Elders*, which is their office. Secondly, aſſiſtance to judge according to their *perſonall abilities*, being thus called to give their advice. But thirdly, ſuch a ſuperadded aſſiſtance as holds

proper

...ation, to that spirituall Bulk, and body which they represent is denied ...nt: for suppose, that alwayes it falls out, that the best and choycest ...a Nation are chosen; yet still not to hold proportion to the whole ...ation, there must be more than an ordinary promise for it; and ...erefore had need be expresse and evident. When the Jesuits say, that ...e Pope may erre, as Persona privata; but not as Pontifex, when he is ...his chaire, representing the whole Church; Davenant confutes them ...us, Officium dat Authoritatem judicandi, sed privatæ personæ conditio- ...nem dant modum & facultatem. That it is otherwise in Common-wealths, ...because they being humane creations, the represented can set up a po- ...wer, which shall represent them: But this power we speak of, is super- ...naturall, and must be from God, and his institution. The Sanedrim of ...Jerusalem, had a speciall assistance above all Courts else; and there- ...fore God appointed Causes to be brought to it; which speciall assi- ...stance is intimated, twice in the institution of it. Deut. 17. by this, That ...they should go up to the place which God shall choose, Ver. 8. And do according ...to the Sentence which they of that place (which the Lord shall choose) shall ...shew thee. An emphasis is put upon that blessing, which by Gods choice ...and election, did accompany that place, which God had chosen to put ...his Name, and promised to be in an eminent manner, present in; and ...accept their Sacrifices there offered, (which was a representative wor- ...ship of that Nation) and not elsewhere. Now, as it was the representa- ...tive worship of the Nation, so these Governours were the representative ...Governours of the Nation; and both sanctified in that place, as the gift ...of the Altar, as that which God had chosen. If the like institution ...are found with the intimation of such a blessing, from a peculiar choice ...of Gods, of Nationall Assemblies, all ought to subject to them, in matters ...spirituall.

De Judice & Norma fidei Pref:

2. If there be such representations as these, in one or few persons of ...many Churches, they have each for that time, whilst in such an Assembly, ...Archiepiscopall and Episcopall power; and their case is parallel (parallel ...here, as for that time and occasion, and as met in a Synod) with that of so ...many Bishops met in a Councell; whose Episcopall power as then, and ...therein met, lies in this, that they are so many Churches representative: ...especially this would fall out, if these Synods should still consist of the ...same men, or if some few should be alwayes chosen to them. And why ...may there not be standing persons that are more skilfull in such affaires, ...by long exercise, as well as standing Assemblies themselves? And then as ...touching matters of Purification, in such an Assembly, they are for ...the present, the same with so many Bishops met in a Convocation.

3. If these representations having the power of all the Churches in the

the Nation, were warrantable, they must BE A CHURCH. Now besides, that they are no where so called: Be it they were called so, then they are a *body to Christ*; for so every Church is; and where is Christ said to have a *representative Body, of his Body*? They are a company of *Elders personally* gathered, but *a representative Church* they are *not*, nor can be; and yet must be, or they have not the power of all the Churches in a Nation in them, nor otherwise doe their acts oblige them to subjection.

Reasons against the allegation of Acts 15. *for the Subordination of Synods*, Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall.

BEsides, what hath been said against this example, *alledged to prove Presbyteriall Acts of Government, by the Elders of the Church of Hierusalem*, in the *Reasons* formerly presented; proving first, that this one example cannot serve to prove both the *Presbyteriall* Government and *Synodicall*; but that if the Reverend Assembly will lean to the one, the other must be quitted. And secondly, that *that Assembly* was *not a formall Synod*, but onely *a reference*, by the particular Church of *Antioch* of their differences among themselves, unto this particular Church of *Hierusalem* and *no other*. It may be moreover observed, that the example of it, is here further extended, to prove all sorts of Synods and Subordinations thereof; both *Provinciall*, *Nationall*, and *Oecumenicall*, and so it must suite all these so great varieties, whereas it is not *fit for any one of them*.

But if it had been a Synod. Yet 1. Neither *Provinciall*, nor *Nationall*, for *Antioch* consults not with the Churches of her *owne Nation*, but seeks to *Hierusalem*, a Church of, *Judea* of *another Nation*, and another *Province*. Neither 2. Is it the instance of a *standing Synod*, (which the word *Subordination* in the proposition, doth necessarily inferre, or else the links of those chaines will not hang together) but *elective*; for they sent out of election, and choice to them, and to them but about *this one Question*, at *this time*, without any obligation to referre other matters to them in an ordinary way. Nor 3. Was there a *multiplication* of Synods, but onely *one*, in whose judgement those of *Antioch* rested. 4. Much lesse is it the instance, of rearing up of a *subordination and contignation of Synods*, superiour and inferiour; which is a farther thing. For though, when offences are not healed, and *no reference to other Churches*, is not sufficient to cure them; there should be

be: seeking to others, yet the example obligeth the Churches that are in difference, not to take and choose the *Churches of that Province*; either as of that Province, or as the greater number, to whom both *those* among whom the controversie is, & *those*, to whom it was afore referred, must be subordinately subject. Much lesse doth it hold forth, that the Churches of that Province, may *judicially* challenge *a right of authority*, to decide it, and oblige them *Subpœna* to their determination; and then, the Churches of that whole Nation challenge the like over all. But still it runs in this way onely; *that those who shall be judged meetest and ablest, and fittest to determine* and compose it, by those who are to refer it, shall have the hearing of it.

The Argument of the Reverend Assembly was drawne from *like reason*, and let there be found like reason, and it is granted: And though the instance is not the pattern of a *formall Synod*; yet it holds forth this rule *of equity*, that when offences arise among Churches, *references ought to be made*, from out of themselves to Churches abroad to heal them. But the question is, to *what Churches* these references are to be made, *and how?* (*Let the like reason hold forth in the example, be kept unto, and decide it*) Say we still, *to those Churches, the Churches offended or divided shall choose as fittest and ablest to determine it.* This is clear in the example, *Antioch* was not bound to refer it to the Church of *Jerusalem*, as *greater*, or *as a neighbour Church*, or of *the same Province*, but as best able to judge of the differences. And this way agrees with the *Law of Nature*, and of *arbitration*, so usuall amongst men, which God hath *there*, set up as an ordinance, and patterne of proceeding in such Cases: But *this Subordination of Synods*, the Proposition intends, holds so *differing a course from this*, As first, instead of *Elective* Synods and *occasionall*, it sets up *standing* and *set*, to be the Judge of the Churches under them *for ever*. Secondly, not *in one case* (as *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*) but in all cases, whatever shall fall out. Thirdly, not in a way of *multiplication or diversification*, as need shall be; but of *subordination* and *setled superiority*; And the grounds of this to be, *because the greatest must rule the lesse*: and that they *are neighbour Churches* in the same *Province* or *Nation*. And this, *Acts* 15. is so farre from countenancing by a *Parallel*, that in *all* things it is *unlike*: and so, there is a differing constitution and rule of these Synods thus subordinate, and what the reason drawne from *Acts* 15. will warrant. And therefore doth make a *differing formall reason* in the Government.

And HUMANE PRUDENCE added, will not rectifie it; when the reason of the institution is so much varied from. For instance, if the *fundamentall*

mentall Law, for remedy of wrongs, and deciding controversies in any Kingdome, were by *arbitration elective*, to take *them* to be their *judges*, whom the parties in difference judge apteſt, every way, for the preſent controverſie; & that the Precedents & ruled caſes hold forth no more: And if the government of *another Kingdom* were, that the *greater* ſhould rule and determine the *cauſes of the* leſſe; and according to the proportion thereof, to have ſubordinate ſtanding Courts erected, to which (by appeal from one to the other) all cauſes ſhould be brought: Whether *were not theſe two, ſuch differing frames of Government*, ſo as, that he, that would mould the firſt to the ſecond, might not be challenged to ſet up a *new Government*, differing from the fundamentall Law of that Kingdome: And whether the firſt is not a liberty to be ſtood upon, againſt the ſecond, if it were vouchſafed to any Kingdome, (and that is the caſe here) is humbly ſubmitted.

And the bounds of ſuch *Aſſemblies elective*, need no ſet or ſtanding rule: becauſe they ariſe from *emergent occaſions*, in caſes of controverſie and offence; and the *extent* of them, And ſo the *condition* and nature of the things themſelves, doe hold forth their *own riſe*: like as the bounds of particular Congregations to be of ſuch, as live ſo, as conveniently to *meet in one place*, ariſeth from the *nature of the thing* it ſelfe, and the neceſſary requiſites thereunto.

Reaſons againſt the Argument, drawne from the Analogie of Matthew 18.

1. THe ſtrength of the Argument runs, *that becauſe there ſhould be this remedy, that therefore, there is ſuch a remedy.*

2. Tis granted, there is a *remedy*: which is a going forth to other Churches, which *Acts* 15. holds forth: But that, *excommunication* (which is the remedy held forth, *Mat.* 18.) *of the offending Church or Churches* ſhould be *the remedy*, is not there held forth, as hath been ſhewn. There is remedy of *Coordination*, ſuch as between *two Nations*, and as between *Pares*, as Churches are, proceeding in a way ſuitable to their condition; but not this of *ſubordination*, that the greater number of Churches ſhould become ſtanding Courts, and have power to excommunicate the leſſer; But that all Churches have a power to *Declare* the offence, and *withdraw the communion* from thoſe Churches. And in reaſon, how is it poſſible *for a Nationall Church to excommunicate all the Churches of a Province*? And how *ineffectuall* would that be? Or for a *Generall Councell to excommunicate a Nation*? And *if they cannot uſe this Remedy*; to what end is this ſubordination of Synods, having this Authority pleaded for?

And

And whereas tis ſaid, *that there muſt be the ſame Remedy, that is in a Congregation, for an offending brother; or elſe where the diſeaſe is ſtrongeſt, the remedy is weakeſt.* It is anſwered,

First, that where the diſeaſe is ſtrongeſt, there, this, which is called the ſtrongeſt remedy, cannot be applyed; or with an apparent inefficaciouſneſſe. For, when the Churches in a *Province* erre, or a *Nationall* Church, here the diſeaſe is ſtrongeſt; and yet it would be in vain, to interdict them, *communion among themſelves, or deliver them unto Satan.* Yea, when it comes to the higheſt, namely, a *Nationall Aſſembly*, wherein (if erring) the diſeaſe is greateſt and ſtrongeſt; there is not onely *no remedy*, but the higheſt and *greateſt power to doe hurt*, upon all under them: As when the *generality* of the Clergy were *Arians.* And if they erre, the Errour is worſe than of a *Popes* erring, or a *Biſhops*: he is but *one*, and may be depoſed. And in the greater bodies of the *Clergie*, the *greater part* are, and have been ſtill the *worſer*, and more corrupt; as is apparent in this Kingdome at preſent; in which, by virtue of the Presbyteriall principles, all Miniſters muſt be taken in: and if you will put them out, where will others be had in their roome? Convert men we cannot; and if not converted, Miniſters, of all others, are the worſt and greateſt oppoſites to Religion. And if a Nationall Aſſembly be choſen *by theſe*, the greater number are like to be of the worſt; and ſuch as may alter all that you Now have done. I.

And if it be ſaid, *that this will hold againſt great politique bodyes as well, who may undoe the Common-wealth.* The *anſwer* is, that the *common* and *equall* intereſt of all, and the common principles of preſerving the rights and liberties of a State, and ſeeking the common good, is *naturall* unto the generality of men; But the *truths* of the Goſpell and *purity of Religion*, and the power thereof, is contrary to the principles of *all naturall men*: and in all ages, the moſt of the Clergy have been apteſt to *corrupt* the one, & *oppoſe* the other. And in thoſe ages, when ſuch Councells began to be Standing, and in moſt Credit, after the firſt 300. years, then was it, that the Myſtery of Popery did worke moſt powerfully; and thoſe ſuperſtitions, and corrupt opinions grew up, which made way for *That man of ſinne*, and that *body* of Popiſh *Doctrine*, that hath over-ſpread the world.

And, if there ſhould be no danger of corrupting the Truth; yet the Churches, though reformed, comming all out of Popery, and not being fully enlightned in all things; and the firſt notion of any thing further in matters of Theology, uſually falling into the hearts & ſpirits but of a few, we ſhould have no further Truth taught, but oppreſſed, *till an whole Nation is enlightned in it.*

II. Secondly, the efficacy of all remedies doth depend, First, upon *Christs blessing on them*, which depends upon his *institution* of them; and *Par ratio, or like reason will never set up an ordinance, unlesse Christ hath himself appointed it.* And in the example, *Acts* 15. there is not this way of proceeding held forth. Secondly, it lies in *suitableneſse to the condition of those* that are to be dealt with. Now when many Churches deal with an erring Church, the Churches in a Province, with many erring Churches, or of a Nation with a Province, they must be in reason dealt with, *suitably to the condition of Churches*, and of a multitude: And surely, a *brotherly way of admonition*, &c. withdrawing communion, is *more suitable* unto such: As in the *civill* government, if a *Province Rebels*, or a great multitude of Subjects; should the State presently *hang up* all in that Province? Although unto *particular persons*, rebelling, this is efficacious to suppresse Rebellion. Thirdly, Christ hath suited his remedies, *to all times*, and unto *all conditions*; and how Nationall and Provinciall Assemblies could be, during the first 300. years, when yet Churches were well governed, is submitted.

And lastly, if the *analogie of this* 18. *of Matthew be argued.* Then First, let the Analogie be kept. And then, when a Church hath offended other Churches, they are not to bring them, to a set Court of judicature at first: for Christs rule is otherwise, in dealing with an offending brother; *Electively to take two or three other Churches* to admonish them, (which is more suited to that way fore-mentioned, *Acts.* 15.) As for the proceedings against a Brother in a Congregation, there is not a set appointed number of *two or three standing persons* to be the admonishers of all persons offending ere it comes to the Church; nor have they power to excommunicate. And thus by *this proportion*, instead of these set and standing Provinciall Assemblies, to whom causes are next brought; and these armed with power of Excommunication; there should onely be *two or three, or more* neighbour *Churches to admonish* the offending Church, and not a *standing Court* to bring it unto. And then

Secondly, let it be shewn where *a standing Synod* of Elders is called THE CHURCH; and how then can the *Analogie* hold, when it holds not in the *Name, Tell the Church?* The *like reason* holds not, unlesse these particular Congregations have the power of *Excommunication*; for otherwise, if these *greater* Assemblies *power* be argued from the *Analogie of the letter*, and the same remedy *Excommunication*, and the *particular Congregations have not, that allowed them*; then by the principles of this Analogie, it is *no where to be found*: but as the *Congregai-*

nall

all Churches have power, onely to admoniſh and ſuſpend from Sacraments, ſo the *greater Aſſemblies* ſhould have no more alſo. And though the *Church univerſall* is called a *Church* and *One Body to Chriſt*; yet as *materially* conſidered, and not as a *Politique body*, in reſpect to *Government*, which was never yet *aſſerted* by THIS ASSEMBLY.

Sic ſubſcribitur: *Tho. Goodwin*, *Philip Nye*, *Jer. Burroughes*, *Sidrach Sympſon*, *William Bridge*, *William Greenhill*, *William Carter*.

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

THE ANSWER OF THE ASSEMBLY of DIVINES, TO THE REASONS OF THE DISSENTING BRETHREN, AGAINST THE Propoſition concerning the SUBORDINATION of *Congregationall, Claſsicall, Provinciall,* and *Nationall* Aſſemblies, for the Government of the Church.

LONDON,
Printed for *Humphrey Harward.* 1648.

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OF THE

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TO THE

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OF THE

DISSENTING BRETHREN,

AGAINST THE

Resolution concerning the SUBORDINATION

of Congregational, Classicall, Provinciall,

and Nationall Assemblies, for the Govern-

ment of the Church.



LONDON,

Printed for Humphrey Harpsted. 1648.

The ANSWER of the *Assembly of Divines*, unto the REASONS of the *Dissenting Brethren* against the SUBORDINATION *of Ecclesiasticall Assemblies of Government, viz.*

It is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God, that there be a Subordination *of* Congregationall, Classicall, Provinciall *and* Nationall *Assemblies, for the Government of the Church.*

BEfore wee make answer particularly to their Arguments, we desire these few things may be premised, to give light to the whole businesse.

1. That this Question is of the same nature with that against which our *Brethren* did give in their former Reasons, [*Whether many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government,*] especially as themselves stated the question. For they there dispute onely against joyning of such Congregations under one Presbytery, as have their Officers particularly fixed to them; (and such a Classicall Presbytery is a kind of Synod;) but they professedly decline the dispute, in case those Officers do all in common take care of those severall Congregations.

2. That the *Praecognita* before our Answer to those Reasons, have the same use here that they had there.

3. That most of these Arguments of our *Brethren*, are the same for substance, with some of their former Arguments, and only put now into another dresse. As will appear further in scanning of them.

4. Our *Brethren* here deny not *Synods* (which they say frequently are an *holy ordinance of God*) nor the *severall sorts* of Synods; but only the *standing use* of them, (as the Prelates did against the Non-conformists, See *Parker de polit. Eccles.* Lib. 2. c. 25.) and their *Subordination one to another*; not the Subordination of Congregations to them.

5. Though our *Brethren* here deny the ſtanding uſe of Synods; yet note of their Arguments are framed againſt that their *ſtanding uſe*, but only againſt the *Subordination* of them. Only they except ſometimes againſt their ſtanding uſe, becauſe the cauſes to be judged there are Occaſionall, which can be no juſt exception. For there may be ſtanding Courts, yet *ſuch* controverſies are occaſionall: And there may be not onely ſtanding *Phyſitians*, but *Colledges* of them, though *diſeaſes* be occaſionall; And there may be not only ſtanding Presbyteries in Congregations, but alſo ſet times of their meeting, and yet their buſineſs be occaſionall.

6. Our *Brethren* acknowledge (in their diſputes and otherwiſe) ſo much concerning Synods and their uſefulneſſe, as is ſufficient to warrant not onely the lawfulneſſe of their *uſe*, but alſo the *ſtanding uſe* of them. As for inſtance. 1. That they are an ordinance of God upon all occaſions of difficulty. 2. That all the Churches of a Province being offended at a particular Congregation, may call that ſingle Congregation to an account; yea all the Churches in a Nation, may call one or more Congregations to an account. 3. That they may examine and admoniſh, and, in caſe of obſtinacy, declare them to be ſubverters of the Faith. 4. That Synods are of uſe to give adviſe to the Magiſtrate in matters of Religion. 5. That they have authority to determine concerning controverſies of faith. 6. That their determinations are to be received with great honour and conſcientious reſpect, and obligation as from Chriſt. 7. That if an offending Congregation refuſe to ſubmit to their determinations, they may withdraw from them and deny Church Communion and fellowſhip with them. 8. That this ſentence of Non-communion may be ratified and backed with the authority of the Magiſtrate, to the end it may be the more effectuall. 9. That they may Convene and call before them any perſon within their bounds, whom the Eccleſiaſticall buſineſſe before them doth concerne; and may hear and determine ſuch cauſes and differences as do orderly come before them. (Beſide many other things which have in the Aſſembly been voted concerning Synods, to which they have entered no diſſent.) And ſurely ſuch things as theſe, wherein there will be occaſion of the uſe of Synods by our *Brethrens* acknowledgement, are ſo ordinary, and likely to fall out ſo often, as will afford occaſion enough for ſet, and frequent meeting of Synods.

7. That whereas our Propoſition and proofes, concerning the ſeverall ſorts of Synods and Church Aſſemblies, do only hold out an *Agreeableneſſe* to the word, and a *Warrantableneſſe* by the word, of theſe ſeverall ſorts of Aſſemblies and their Subordination: Our *Brethrens* arguments do only indeavour to prove, that *the Scripture doth not expreſſe*

positive designation; that is, that they have not an *expresse institution*: which is not our Assertion, and to which we spake sufficiently in our Letters to their former Reasons now before the Honourable Houses. For though we agree with our *Brethren*, that Synods are an ordinance of God; yet do not plead an expresse Institution, that each Synod must necessarily be thus and thus bounded, according to the division of Shires or Provinces, so that there may not be more or fewer then such a number, nor otherwise bounded or divided, (no more then either we, or our *Brethren*, can plead for the number and bounds of particular Congregations;) Though yet we do affirme that Synods thus bounded are agreeable to, and warranted by the word of God.

2. That the arguments of our *Brethren* against such Synods as we assert, do in many things militate as strongly against such Elective Synods which themselves allow, as against our Assertion. As will appear in the particulars.

The Answer to their first Argument.

These things being premised, we come to their first Argument, which they forme thus; *Those Courts which must have the most expresse warrant and designment for them in the word, and have not; their power is to be disputed, and not exercised in the Church of God. But those ought to have it, and have not. Therefore, &c.*

Ans. 1. Our *Brethren* here lay out their strength in proving the *Minor*, and shew that these Assemblies are not *Instituted*; but wave that which is in question; whether they be *agreeable to* an Institution, or the word of God. For things which are not in every particular of them Instituted, may yet be agreeable to an Institution, and the Word of God. But if they would have concluded against the Proposition, they must have argued thus, *Those Assemblies which* (though for the generall they have an institution, and are an ordinance of God, yet in particular) *have not the greatest and most expresse warrant and designement for them in the Word*, and that both *for their Subordination and Number*, and also *for their Bounds, and limites of Power*, are not *agreeable to, or warranted by the word of God*. But if they contend onely, that what hath not such expresse designment hath not *in those particulars* an expresse *Institution*, and may not therefore be erected *as* so *instituted*, they contend about that which is not now in question.

2. Their Argument if it have any strength at all against our proposition, proves more then our *Brethren* pretend to strive for; For they professe here to dispute against the *Subordination* of them, and not against the *being* and *existence* of them; which they grant to be lawfull and needfull. If our *Brethren* can shew such a particular *expresse designement*

for the *bring* of them, we shall be glad to hear it: If they cannot, but say onely (as we doe) that they are *agreable to*, & *warranted by* the word; then either their argument hurts not not us, or else it overthrow what themselves grant.

But we will examine the *Reasons* our *Brethren* bring to *prove* their *Minor*. Yet must tell them withall, that their *Major* (of which they offer no proof at all) may admit of an exception. For though it were granted, That such things as *have* expresse designment in the word, *ought* in the practice of them to be conformed to that designement (in their bounds, limits, number, &c. if any such designement be) yet we must not therefore infer, That if there be any *failure in any of these*, the thing were better *not be at* all, yea *ought not* at all to be; which is the sense of their *Major* Proposition. The *Passover* had particular designement for the time, place, persons, &c. Yet *Hezekiah* thought fit to keep a Passover, though *varying in some particulars*, from that *designement*, rather then not to keep a Passover at all. Yet say our *Brethren* in this Argument, That Synods which themselves call *an holy ordinance of God*, and grant that they have an *expresse warrant and designement for them in the word*, (or else, by this argument, they must not, as here they do, grant them *lawfull*, and of *great use*) may not yet be *at all* erected, unlesse we can find out the *Greatest and most Expresse warrant and designement* for their *Subordination, and Number, And for their Bounds and limits of power*. In *Civill Courts*, we are sure they may be agreeable to, and warrantable by the Word of God, though they have no such expresse particular designement in all those circumstances: But, say our *Brethren*, in *the Church of God*, Courts may not be erected unlesse there be such designements of *those particulars*, though the *Courts themselves* be designed.

To the first part of the Minor.

To prove the first part of their *Minor* (that Synods ought to have such expresse warrant and designement in these particulars) they bring five reasons, and in all of them professe to argue *à pari ratione*.

But we aske th m, whether *argument ans à pari ratione*, be a sufficient argument *in the point in hand, and others of like nature*. If it be, then they must not blame *us* for using such arguments, but grant *us* arguing (*à pari ratione*) from *analogie*; though in matters of institution, to be a good way of arguing. If it be not, then they ought to have brought other arguments themselves: For it is not enough to plead, that *We use* such arguments, unless they say too, that *we do Well* in using them. For if *argumentum ab inconvenienti* only be a sufficient argument against our proposition, then is *Responsio ad hominem* a sufficient Answer to their Argument, and we need say no more to these five arguments, then That it is a *way of arguing* which them-

themselves allow not. But we will consider of them particularly.

Their first reason *à pari ratione* is this; That *in the Government of the Church, For the Subordination of* OFFICERS *there was an expresse institution*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. *God hath set in his Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, (and Evangelists, who were of a parallel order) thirdly Teachers*: (they should have added, *after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, Governments, diversities of tongues*) *But* say they, *Christ hath not set the like Subordination of* COURTS. (They should have said, *Therefore there* OUGHT TO BE *the like for the Subordination of Courts*; for they are now proving the first part of their *Minor*, That such *ought to be*, not the second part that such is not.) I.

In answer to this we say. 1. That they do not in this Argument undertake to prove that Synods are not of *standing use*, much lesse, that they *may not be erected*, but that they may not be *Subordinate*.

2. That, whatever Subordination there was of an Officer of *one kind* to an Officer of *another kind*, and whatever power and authority *Apostles* had *over others*, yet no such *Subordination of Officers* can be proved out of *This place*. A *Diversity* of Officers may be proved from hence, and perhaps a *difference in Dignity*, (*that greater is he that Prophesieth, then he that speaketh with Tongues*) but not a *Subordination* of officers for Government. And we do not beleeve that our *Brethren* will say, that *Ruling Elders* (whom they grant to be included in *Governments*) are subordinate to those that *work Miracles*, and those to *Teachers*; those to *Prophets*, and those againe to *Apistles*; and that *Appeales* might be made from the *Ruling Elder* to him that *workes Miracles*, from him to the *Teachers*, &c.

3. How doth his Text prove a Subordination of *Evangelists* to Apostles, and of *Teachers* to them? For the *Evangelist* is not mentioned in the Text. As for what they adde, (*who were of a parallel order*) 1. This is but *Gratis dictum*, they doe not prove it; if they alledge that in *Eph.* 4. 11. Evangelists are reckoned Apostles, *after* and *before* Pastors and Teachers, and therefore must be of the *same order* with *Prophets*; we answer, 2. That the *Method* there used doth not prove a *Subordination*, which is the point in question; for if so, then must Evangelists be *subordinate* to Prophets, not *coordinate* and of a parallel order: And they might as well, for ought there appears, be of a parallel order with *Pastor and Teachers*, as of a parallel order with *Prophets*. And 3. If it be granted that they are of *a parallel order* with Prophets, yet that there must be therefore *the same Subordination* of them to Apostles, and of Teachers to them, is not an *expresse Institution*, but onely an Argument,

à pari rationè, Because there is the *same reason* for the Subordination of *Evangelists*, that there is of *Prophets*. 4. We hence observe that our *Brethren* make use of an Argument onely, *à pari ratione*, to prove a *positive* Institution. For their Argument is to this purpose; For the Subordination of *Prophets* there is an *expresse Institution*, & there is the *like reason* for the Subordination of *Evangelists*, *Ergo*, *Evangelists* are also subordinate. We might as wel argue, that for the Subordination of *Officers* there is an expresse Institution, and there is the like reason for Subordination of *Courts*; Therefore *Courts* also are to be subordinate. And if they will not allow this to be a just exception, [That for the Subordination of *Prophets* there was a *speciall Institution*, or else it might not have been owned, But there is *the same reason* of the Subordination of *Evangelists*, Therefore there must be also an *expresse Institution* for that too (and not onely an argument *à pari ratione*) or else it must not be owned,] They must not then make use of this argument against us, but do themselves deny the strength of it.

4. They might as wel argue, There was an expresse Institution *for Subordination in the Church*, or else it might not be owned; and therefore (*à pari ratione*) there must be *as expresse* an Institution for *taking it away*, or else it must be owned still. Yea that, There was an expres Institution for *setting* Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Miracles, Tongues, &c. in the Church: and therefore (*à pari ratione*) there must be as expresse an institution for *removing* them, or else they continue still. For there is the same Authority requisite to *remove* an institution, that there is to *establish* it. And when our *Brethren* have well considered these things, together with the practises of their owne wayes, and so stated, interpreted, and limited what they say here, as that themselves will be willing to stand to it, and their own principles and practises not vanish before it; we doubt not but to shew better and clearer warrant for *Synods*, for their *Subordination*, and for their *standing use*, (though yet our Proposition speakes nothing of the *standing use* of Synods) then they can do for many practises of their owne, which yet they beleeve, not only to be Agreeable to, and Warranted by the Word, but to have the nature of *Institutions*.

II. Their second reason is this; That *Presbyterians require an Institution in the case of the subordination of Bishops, Arch-Bishops, Patriarchs, and Popes; But as we read not in the Scripture of the name of an Arch-Bishop, nor of the thing; so we read not in Scripture of Councells, Provincial and Nationall, names or things. Yea, and the disadvantage is rather on this side; for we are sure, that once there was in the Church, such a subordination of Officers, Evangelists over Pastors, and Apostles over Evangelists, but of*

such

such a subordination of Councells in an Aristocraticall way there is nothing to be found.

Ans. 1. Still we note our Brethrens pleading for Episcopacy; yea, for Papacy, (which both they and we have covenanted to extirpate) rather then the Government of the Reformed Churches, which both they and we have covenanted to maintaine, at least against the common Enemy.

2. Of Prelacy amongst *Ministers*, we finde nothing in Scripture, much against it; and therefore Presbyterians do not onely call for warrant or institution for the *Subordination* of Bishops, Arch-Bishops, but for the *being* of them as our Brethren themselves observe: *The usuall exception against this subordination of such Church-Officers is, that in Scripture, we read neither of the name of an Arch-Bishop, nor the thing, and therefore not of a Subordination to them.* But of *Synods*, our Brethren will not say that we finde nothing in Scripture, either *name* or *thing*: For themselves acknowledge them an holy Ordinance of God. And for the *Bounds* of them, whether they may consist of the Ministers of one Province, or more Provinces, or lesse then a Province; is no more a matter of Institution, then whether a particular Congregation may consist of 40,50, or 150 Members; and those inhabiting within one mile, two miles, or three miles distance; but is to be regulated by the generall rules of the Word, and particular circumstances of times, places, and persons. And for their *Subordination*, we have already shewed (in our former Answer, and the proofes of our Propositions) sufficient warrant from the generall rules of the Word, the light of nature, and paritie of reason; beside, what is strongly argued from the Precedent of the Jewish Church, in matters of Ecclesiastical concernment. But our Brethren should have remembred, that they are but proving the *first* part of their *Minor*, (that Synods *must have* such Institution;) & therefore most of this discourse is not to the purpose in *this* place.

III. Their third instance, *à pari ratione*, is this; *As in other Societies and bodies politick, in the rearing of a contignation of power, there must be an Ordinance or Creation from them; not onely of the severall kindes of Officers, & of severall Courts; and a set and expresse Order, both of the number and kinds of Courts of Judicatory, from whom, and to whom Appeals are to be made, and in what cases, &c. Which Courts the greater and higher they be, the more expresse evidence and warrant for their power there is and ought to be, as for Parliamentary power & the priviledges thereof: So must there proportionably a Divine Institution for the Contignation & Subordination of Spirituall power, beside that of the Distinction of Officers themselves.*

Ans.

Ans. Not to Dispute the Principles of *Policy* here laid down; Whether a State may not give power to the JUSTICES of PEACE in such or such a County, to preserve the *Peace* there; and see that the known *Lawes* of the Kingdome be observed, without setting down expressly how *often*, at what *places*, and in how many *divisions* they shall meet for that purpose; and how many sorts of *Committees* or *Sub-committees* they shall make of themselves for the better effecting of it? Or, whether they may not give Commission to a GENERALL to Command an *Army*, for such and such purposes; without prescribing expressly, into how many *Companies*, *Regiments*, *Brigades*, &c. they shall be divided, and in what *Proportions* and *Subordinations*? Or, whether a PARLIAMENT must have *more expresse* evidence and warrant for all part cular of Power or Authority that they exercise, or Priviledge that they challenge, then *inferiour* Judicatories need to have? We Answer (to the Argument, *a pari ratione*, upon this supposition.)

1. That our Brethren oft except against such arguing as this. Thus it is in *Civill States*, therefore thus it ought to be in *Church Government*.

2. That this Argument, for substance, is the same with that in their former Discourse, of *Power over Power*; which we then Answered at large.

3. We here adde, That there ought not to be *here* required *such an expresse and plaine* Designment out of the Word, as in Civill and Humane institutions for *Civill Courts*, and their Subordination: the Scripture not being written *Systematically*, nor delivered in the manner as Humane Lawes are, but as a *golden Mine* to be diligently searched in all the veines: and therein we may finde sufficient for our warrant and direction, together with the light of Nature and Reason, to apply these Rules to particular Cases. And by *such* Rules our Brethren themselves will not refuse to goe in many particulars in the Government of the Churches.

IIII. Their fourth instance is, *If in a particular Church Christ hath prescribed the severall Subordinations of proceedings, with the Degrees, Bounds, and Order of them*, Mat. 18. *so that it were not orderly in a Set Way to make any more steps or degrees of Admonition, beside those which Christ hath assigned: it had been much more necessary to have appointed the like also in these greater Assemblies, which have the power of a Sentence or Judgment; and of which, if Christ hath not set them forth their bounds and order, None can tell what belongs to them, or which of them first to appeal unto.*

Ans.

Anſ. 1. Our *Brethren* here ſay not, That Chriſt hath ſet a ſtanding fixt Order and Subordination of proceedings in a particular Church, which is *always to be held unto*; but onely, That in *a ſet ordinary way* we are to make no more; tacitely yeilding (as ſome of them did in the Aſſembly expreſly) that after one or more Admonitions by *one*, then by *two or three*, there may ſometimes (if there be hope of gaining him thereby) be an Admonition by *eight or tenne*, before they *tell it the Church*.

2. Our Brethren ſhould have ſhewed what *Method, Terms, Bounds*, or *Subordinations* of proceedings, Chriſt had preſcribed to the Church *when offences are* PUBLICK *and openly Scandalous*, as well as *when* PRIVATE *and known but to a ſingle Brother:* Unleſſe they would give leave to argue, as here themſelves doe: [That if Chriſt have preſcribed the ſeverall Subordinations of proceedings, and ſet forth the Degrees, Bounds, and Order of them, in caſe of *a* PRIVATE *offence*, and how the Church may come to take cognizance of it: then much more ſhould this have been done in caſe of *a* PUBLICK *offence* and *ſcandall*, if he had intended the Church ſhould at all proceed upon it; which if he have not done, the Church (it ſeemes by this argument) *may not take notice of That at all:*] For if they ſay, That the Directions here given, concerning a *private offence*, will *pari ratione* ſerve for direction and warrant to proceed in a juſt proportion (*mutatis mutandis*) in caſe of *a publick ſcandall*; We may ſay the like concerning *Synods*, That the Directions here given concerning the manner of proceeding in a *particular Church*, will afford a ſufficient direction and warrant to proceed in a like proportion, in a *Synod*, or *Combination of Churches*.

3. Our *Brethren* ſhould have ſhewed, That by CHURCH, is there meant a *particular Congregation*, and *That onely:* For if *Telling a* SYNOD, or a *Church of Churches* (as Mr. *Cotton* calls it) may be ſaid to be *Telling the Church*; and if thoſe that *refuſe to hear a Synod*, may be ſaid to *refuſe to hear the Church*; and if the *Preſence of Chriſt* promiſed to *two or three gathered together in his name*, may be applyed to a *Synodicall* meeting, as well as to a meeting in a *particular Church*; and if that *Ratification in heaven*, of what the Apoſtles (and thoſe who ſucceed them in that power) doe *bind or looſe on Earth*, may as well be meant of their power in *Synods*, as of their power in a *particular Congregation*; (and that it may not be ſo, our *Brethren* have not yet ſhewed:) Why may we not then beleeve, That the Bounds and Limits, and Order of proceedings in a *Synod* (which themſelves grant to be *Lawfull*, and an *Ordinance of God*) have as *ſufficient* direction and warrant from this place, as the proceedings in a *particular Congregation?* Nor have our

Brethren yet shewed that the *Synodicall* proceedings, *Acts*, 15. were not in pursuance of, and obedience to *this Order* of Christ, in *Mat.* 18.

4. If our *Brethren* had shewed, That it is meant (properly and immediately) onely of a *single Congregation*; and that the manner and degrees, and Subordinations of proceeding, both in cases of *private* and *publick* scandalls, had been *so distinctly* set downe, as not to admit of *any variation*, either in the *number* of Admonitions, or *steps of proceeding* by way of gradation, before they come to the *highest degree* in that particular Church; or in the *manner of proceeding there*, to be more or lesse slow or expeditious in proceeding, before they come to the *last sentence*, according as the nature of the Crime, or quality and disposition of the person might require: Yet there might be reason why the same particulars should not be *so precisely determined* for *Associations* or *Combinations* of Churches in their Bounds and Limits; because, though *where they can be had*, they much conduce to the *well-being* of particular Churches; yet our Lord knew that it would not be *alike easie* at all times, and in all places to obtaine them, in the *like extent or proportion*; in regard sometimes of *persecution*, or at least for want of countenance from the Magistrate, sometimes by reason of the *paucity* and *distance* of Churches; and sometimes for other difficulties and obstructions that may hinder: so that *where they can be had*, they have the Authority and Blessing of a *Divine Institution*, being an Ordinance of God; yet are not *so precisely determined*, as that they must be so *many*, so *often*, and so many *Subordinations* or *gradations* in them. Sometimes no more *Churches* perhaps may have that opportunity to Associate, then may all joyne in one CLASSIS; sometimes no more *Classes* then to make one SYNOD: and yet elsewhere, or at other times, there may be opportunity, not onely of particular Churches combining in *Classes*, but of Classes in *Synods*, and many Synods in one, or more *larger Associations*.

5. The *Order* and *Degrees* of ELECTIVE SYNODS, (which yet our *Brethren* allow as an *Ordinance of God*) are no more set downe, or limited in Scripture, then the order or degrees of STANDING *Synods*: And *the same* inconveniences which our *Brethren* here object, (and many more) will fall *as heavy* upon such *Elective Synods*. For, if when a difficulty falls out in a particular Congregation in our *Brethrens* way; some should plead to have the aide of *one sister Church*, some of *another*; some of *two or three*, some of *all in the Province* or *Nation*; because *in the multitude of Counsellors there is safety*: Or, if they would goe first to *one*, then joyne *two or three others*, then *call in the rest* if need be; or first goe *per saltum* to them *all*; what have *our Brethren* here to plead but *Generall Rules*, *Christian prudence*, *Light of Nature*? Even the *same* with *Us*.

Their

Their laſt inſtance *à pari ratione*, is from the Jewiſh Church; *In* V.
the Church of the Jewes, ſay they, *the Subordinations that were, were ſet forth and determined by Inſtitution or Example, how many Courts there ſhould be, and where to reſt.*

Anſ. 1. We ſhall not need here to diſpute, whether *all* the Courts in *Iſrael* are ſet forth and determined in Scripture; or whether *no Court* there, either *was* or *might be* ſet up before they had either *Inſtitution*, or *Precedent example* for it: But we ſuppoſe it will be hard for our *Brethren* to prove it.

2. Suppoſe them ſo to be; yet there is not a like reaſon, that there muſt be now *a like particular* determination; becauſe all Churches under the New Teſtament are not of *a like extent*, and *alike capable* of Aſſociations.

3. The JEWISH *Subordinations*, being no *Temple Ordinances*, nor *Typicall* or *Ceremoniall*, doe in the *morall equity* of them concern Us, as well as Them; at leaſt we may, with much more reaſon urge an Argument, *à pari ratione*, from Subordinations in the *Jewiſh Church* to prove a Subordination *ſtill*; then our *Brethren* can argue from thence againſt it: For the *Grounds* of that Subordination being from *morall equity*; and the *Ends* & *Neceſſity* of it being the ſame, *Now* as *Then*, (*viz.* Reſolving *difficult caſes*, ordering matters of *Common concernment*, Reforming Offences in *Inferiour Societies*, Receiving *Appeals*, Redreſſing of Injuries and Neglects in *male adminiſtration*, &c.) the ſame reaſon ſtill remaines, that for the ſame Ends and Purpoſes, there ſhould be Subordinations *now* in the *Chriſtian Church*, that was *then* in the *Jewiſh*.

And thus we have anſwered their Reaſons, (*à pari ratione*) for the proof of the firſt part of their *Minor*, *That Synods muſt have the* GREATEST *and moſt* EXPRESSE *Warrant and Deſignment in the Word, &c.* Its enough for us, if there be but a SUFFICIENT Warrant, we muſt not preſcribe the Holy Ghoſt, How *Great*, and how *Expreſſe* that Warrant muſt be. And when our *Brethren* ſhall undertake to prove the practices of their owne way; (*Gathering Churches out of Churches*; *Ordination and Depoſition of Miniſters by the people Alone*: *Their elective Synods*; *Their Non-communicating of Churches* in their way; that one ſingle Church may *denounce the ſentence of Non-communion againſt other Churches*, whether one or more; yea, againſt *All* the Churches in a *Province* or *Kingdome*, whom That particular Church ſuppoſeth to miſcarry; with many other practices, which if need were, we might inſtance in;) we doubt not but they will *abate* ſome of theſe expreſſions; and will deſire us to except of *ſomewhat leſſe* then *the* GREATEST

TEST *and most* EXPRESSE *Warrant and Designment in the Word, both for their* SUBORDINATION *and* NUMBER, *and for their* BOUNDS *and Limits of* POWER: And some of them have told us, That the Rule they goe by, in searching after Institutions; is not to rest satisfied with such Texts *onely*, as doe *clearly* set them downe, or must *necessarily* be so interpreted: But *if to their Consciences, they seeme by any circumstance, to incline or lean this way, rather then the other; and that this seemes to be the meaning of the holy Ghost, rather then the other, (though the Text might possibly admit of another interpretation, yet) it is enough to their Consciences to prove an Institution.*

To the Second part of their *Minor*.

The Second part of their *Minor* they come next to prove, *That these Synods have not* SUCH EXPRESSE *Warrant and Designment*; (They should have proved, That they have No *Designment or Warrant* AT ALL; or else they hurt not our Proposition, which saith onely, They are *Agreeable to, and Warranted by* the Word of God.)

For proof of it they say, 1. *The New Testament is silent in it. And if it be said that all Nations* (we suppose they would have said, *Whole Nations*) *were not then converted: they Answer, The Apostles, though they had not lived to see that which might occasion such an Institution; yet would have left order for the time to come.*

Ans. 1. The Scripture is no more Silent of *these*, then of *Elective* Synods.

2. The Subordination of particular Churches to greater Assemblies, is held out, *Act.* 15. And in *Mat.* 18. (as we have shewed in our proofs of this Proposition;) such particulars only excepted, which are common with the Church to other Bodyes politick, and are determinable by Natures Light: So that, herein there was *sufficient order taken*, not only for the present, but for the time to come.

3. Our *Brethren* themselves acknowledge, that there is, *Act.* 15. *a going out from a particular Church, Electively to another Church, or Churches*, (so that there is not a *Totall Silence* in this point) but they do not tell us, To *how many* Churches they may goe out, nor, *To which first*, nor, *How often* they may goe out successively, in case their Divisions or Difficulties be not removed upon their *first* going out. And our *Brethren* tell us at other times, that a Church may not only *goe out*, but may be *called out*, to give an *account to a Church or Churches offended*; yea, to *All* the Churches of a *Province* or *Nation* (which how it can be done without a *Provinciall* or *Nationall Synod*, we cannot tell;) and this is no *going out* ELECTIVELY, for it is not at *their choice*, what Churches they shall give account to: But when our *Brethren* undertake to

prove

prove this, we beleeve they will content themſelves with ſome ſuch proofs as we have produced for our Propoſition.

But 2. Say our Brethren, *The Apoſtles lived to ſee many particular Churches, in Provinces and Nations; and though all the Inhabitants were not Members of Churches, yet there was Matter for moulding them into thoſe Subordinations, as now in* France, *where not a third part are Proteſtants, and in the* Low-Countries, *where not a tenth part are Church-Members; ſo that, if theſe ſuperſtructions had been ſo abſolutely neceſſary, it had been as neceſſary that the Apoſtles ſhould have appointed them.*

Anſ. Whether in *France*, not a *third part* be Proteſtants, or in the *Low-Countries* not a *tenth part* Members of Churches, we ſtand not now to diſpute. And whether it were NECESSARY for the Apoſtles to have *Appointed* ſuch Subordinations, if they be at all *Warrantable*; doth not belong to this place, but to the firſt part of the *Minor*, where we have ſpoken to it: Onely this we adde here, That they ſhould have ſhewed that they had a *Poſſibility*, *Liberty*, and *Opportunity* of erecting ſuch Subordinations, as well MATTER *for the moulding* of them. We have not *Claſſicall*, *Provinciall*, *Nationall* Aſſemblies at preſent in *England*; not becauſe we think we *ought not* to have them, or that we *may not* have them, but becauſe we have not had *Opportunity to erect* them.

But that which our *Brethren* are now to prove, is, that the Apoſtles DID NOT appoint them: And how ſhould that be proved, but by this Reaſon? *We read not of theſe Subordinations in the Nations of* Judea, Aſia, Crete, *in which were famous particular Churches*; therefore there were no ſuch Subordinations: And that *Chriſt writing to the ſeven Churches of* Aſia, *writes to each Church apart, and not to a Provinciall, or Nationall Synod of them.*

Anſ. 1. They might as well argue, Becauſe we read not that the Apoſtles did Appoint *in the Churches of Judea, Aſia, and Crete,* (or, that thoſe Churches did practice) the ordinances of publicke *Singing of Pſalmes*; *Reading of the Word*; *and Baptizing of Children*; *the Examination and Tryall of thoſe that were to be admitted Members of Churches, before their Admiſſion*; *Catechizing*; *Viſitation of the ſicke*; that the *Women* did eate and drink at the Lords Table as well as the *men*, or the like; Therefore there were no ſuch things in thoſe Churches. If it be ſaid, There was Warrant and Appointment for *thoſe* things, *in other places of Scripture*: So ſay we of *Synods* and their *Subordination*. The Scripture giveth not many Inſtances of one particular of Church Government; we have one Inſtance of *Excommunication* in the Church

of *Corinth*, and but that one of a *Churches Excommunicating* in the New Testament; And we have *one* Instance of a *Synod*; and why should not That be as sufficient as the Other?

2. Neither do we read of any *Elective Synod for Arbitration* in these Churches, such as our *Brethren* yet hold for an Ordinance of God; and we are sure their *Errours*, *Divisions*, &c. needed the help of *every* Ordinance, as our *Brethren* confesse. And Christ writes no more to the seven Churches of *Asia*, concerning *such Elective Synods*, then of these *Subordinations*: and the Objection lies as strongly against their way, as ours.

3. But this we read sufficiently, That the Church of Christ is, *One Body*, and the *Officers* given to it, for the good of *all the Body*: and we read of *All* the Churches of *Galatia* written to, as *one Body*, as *one Loaf*, and we read of the *Communion of the Churches one with another* in many particulars, as we shewed at large in our former Answer; which is sufficient for our Assertion.

And as to what they alledge of *Christ writing to the seven Churches apart, and reproving Each of them for their own disorders*, which our *Brethren* suppose he would not have done, if they had been *in a standing Association for Government*. We Answer,

1. If so; yet we need not inquire far for a Reason: They were *several Churches*, and had their *severall Faults*, and needed *severall Counsels*, and consequently *severall Letters*: as in a Kingdome, where all are allowed; yet the severall Provinces or Congregations, may need several Reproofs or Advises; some being Cold, Luke-warme, Declining, others Pure, Zealous, Growing, &c.

2. But if our *Brethren* consider better of it, they shall finde that all these *seven Letters* (yea, the whole Revelation) were written to *All* the seven Churches *in common*, as appeares, *Revel.* 1. 4. yet so that *each* might take speciall notice of that which did most *peculiarly concern them*: As when a Minister, in a Sermon to a mixed Congregation, taxes some of one fault, some of another; reproves the Rich perhaps for *Pride*; the Poor, for *Envy*; the Magistrate for negligence in *his place*; the Masters, Servants, Parents, Children, each for *their severall faults*; or perhaps *Reproves* some, *Commends* others, &c. which doth not yet hinder, but that *all* these make *one* Congregation. Or, to use their own Instance, if a letter be directed to a *National* or *Provincial Synod*, it is very proper to shew therein, what in *one* Congregation or Classis, is to be *commended*; what in *another* is to be *Reproved*; and not *promiscuously* to reprove or commend all alike: And our *Brethren* may remember, that in *some Letters* directed to this Assembly, there have been some

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time large *Apoſtrophe's* directed particularly to *themſelves*, and not ſpoken to the *whole Aſſembly*, notwithſtanding they are *a part* of it, and in a *ſtanding aſſociation* therein with the reſt: And ſo it is evident that the whole *Epiſtle* or Book of the *Revelation* is directed in common, to ALL theſe *ſeven Churches joyntly*, though yet there be ſomething ſpoken *particularly to each*, beſide that which is ſpoken *in common to All*.

3. Our *Brethren* do again herein as much diſpute againſt themſelves; for we have no more mention of *Elective* Synods, then of *Subordinate*; *Pergamus*, and *Thyatira*, though troubled with *Errours in Doctrine*, &c. yet are not directed to *ſeek out to an Elective Synod* to redreſſe them; nor are the *other* Churches directed to *call them to give an account*; nor is *any* of the Churches either *commended* for ſo doing, or *blamed* for not doing it. Yet *both* of theſe, according to our *Brethrens* principles, *ought* to have been done; and this *ſilence* about it, will not (we beleeve) be admitted by our *Brethren* as a ſufficient argument to overthrow either the *Lawfulneſſe*, or the *Inſtitution*, of *Elective* Synods.

To what in the laſt place, our *Brethren* adde, *That they are never called by the name* CHURCH, *but* CHURCHES. We Anſwer, as before, whether they be or no, it matters not; we inquire for *Things*, not for *Names*. Nor 2. Doth the name CHURCHES prove that they were not *one* CHURCH by Aſſociation; no more then that the FLOCKS, *Gen.* 30. 36. 38. were not *one* FLOCK, as they are called *Verſe* 31, 32. And *Peter* ſpeaking of *many* Churches, yet calls them *The* FLOCK, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. And 3. The *many Churches* or *Congregations* in *Jeruſalem*, are yet called one *Church*; and ſo at *Epheſus*; as we have ſhewed already at large; (to ſay nothing of the Church of *Antioch*, and the Church of *Corinth*, which is likewiſe called *Churches*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. And the often mention of *The Church in ſuch an ones houſe*; which, whether it be meant of a *Chriſtian Family*, or of a *Congregation ordinarily meeting there*; yet were they *part* of a greater *ſociety* conſiſting of *many of theſe*, which is alſo called a CHURCH:) And when *Paul* is ſaid to perſecute the *Church* of God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. *Phil.* 3. 6. and *Gal.* 1. 13. yet were the CHURCHES *of Judea* either *this* CHURCH, or *part* of this Church which *Paul* perſecuted, *Verſe* 21, 22. And indeed, whether a *Family* or *Congregation*, or a *Combination of them* are called a CHURCH, they are but *Synecdochically* ſo called, as being all *parts* of that *one* CHURCH, which is the *Body of Chriſt*. And *Stephanus* obſerves as much in his *Theſaurus*, *Tom.* 2. p. 23. *Hinc ſit, ut* ἐκκλησία *in numero multitudinis ſæpe occurrat, quum alioqui unam eandemque omnes efficiant Eccleſiam.* And as Chriſt the Husband hath but *one* SPOUSE, (though yet *Synecdochically*,

chically, every Beleever may be called the *spouse of Christ*) and Christ the *Head*, hath but *one* BODY; so but *one* CHURCH, which is the *Body of Christ*, *Ephes.* 1. 22, 23. And our *Brethren* themselves in their *Apologeticall Narration*, *page* 6. speaking of Parochiall Congregations in England, call them *the true Churches and* BODY *of Christ*, not BODIES *of Christ*, though yet each of them, by the same reason that they are called a *Church*, might have been called *The Body of Christ*; yet all of them together, are indeed but a *part* of that *Body*.

The Answer to their Second Argument.

Their second Argument is formed thus; *If there be such a Subordination of Synods, then there is no Independency, but in an Oecumenicall Councell.* Which we suppose they have therefore set downe briefly; because if fully set downe, it would not sound so well: For thus it should be; *If there may be a Subordination of Congregationall, Classicall, Provinciall and Nationall Assemblies; then there is no Independency but in an Oecumenicall Councell.*

Ans. Our *Brethren* know there is nothing of *Oecumenicall Councell* in our Proposition, or of Subordination to them, or Dependence on them. For though the Assembly had asserted in another Proposition, (to which our *Brethren* entred no Dissent) that there *may* be an *Oecumenicall* Synod when it can be had; yet, what the Power thereof is, and, How far other Assemblies, Depend on it; they have not asserted, but thought fit rather to consider of *such* Assemblies, as through the blessing of God we may possibly enjoy, and what power they have. But if our *Brethren* will from our Proposition inferre that, by a *Consequence of their owne*, they should have added some *Proof* of that Consequence; or at least an *Explication*, that we might see wherein the strength of their Consequence lyes: For such a Consequence as this, If there MAY be a *Nationall*, there MUST be an *Oecumenicall Synod*; and if there *may* be a Subordination to *That*, there *must* be a Subordination to *This*, (which seemes to be the strength of their Argument) had need have some proof. Our *Brethren* grant that there MAY BE *a going out for advise to other Churches*; to the Churches of *a Province*, to the Churches of *a Nation*, if occasion and opportunity serve; yet doe not say, that there MUST BE *a going out to all the Churches in the world*, whether there can be such a meeting or no; or that *Gods Providence is not suitable to his Institutions*, if such a meeting cannot be had; or that there must be an *injurious confining* to the Advice of the Churches in one Nation, if they cannot have the Advice of such an *Oecumenick meeting*; which yet, if it

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could be had, were like to be *remedium efficaciſſimum*, and *a holy Ordinance of God*, as well as any of the reſt.

But ſince our *Brethren* have choſen this diſcourſe about *Oecumenick Synods*, and therein let paſſe the proof of the *Conſequence*; and onely give ſome Reaſons to make the *Conſequent* ſeeme improbable; we ſhall briefly follow them therein: And doe firſt obſerve how ill their three Confirmations of it hang together; in the firſt they reaſon againſt us, as holding a Nationall Church *not to be Independent*; in the third, as if we held a Nationall Church *to be Independent*; in the ſecond they argue againſt the very *being and exiſtence* of *Oecumenick Synods*.

Firſt, ſay our Brethren, *this would bring in a forraign Eccleſiaſticall Power over each State and Kingdome*; to wit, if their Conſequence be good, and that there be no Independency but in an Oecumenick Councell.

Anſ. We ſuppoſe they would ſay, *over each* NATIONALL CHURCH or *Nationall Aſſembly*, not *over each State and Kingdome*: The *Church* and *Civil ſtate* are differing things; as the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Kingdom of the world: To bring in ſuch a Forraign Eccleſiaſticall Power as ſhould be over *Civil States*, is Popiſh; But the help of an Oecumenick Synod, when it may be had, is no *Forraign Power* to the *Church*, nor any *Hurt* to the *Civil State*. The Ordinances of Chriſt are none of them Forraigne to the Church, nor any of them Hurtful to the State.

Secondly, ſay our Brethren, *Such a Councell being the moſt Efficacious and Ultimate Remedy, muſt be ſuppoſed to have ſome ſpeciall Indigitation in the Word, and ſpeciall Promiſe made to it; and that God, who ſuites his Providences to his Inſtitutions, would have taken order that it ſhould be exſtant in all ages; whereas the Church wanted Oecumenick Councells for 300 years.*

Anſ. 1. If we ſhould grant our *Brethren*, not onely what they ſay, That the Church wanted them for three hundred yeares; but, That perhaps, there never yet was an intire compleat *Generall Councel* rightly conſtituted, and God onely knowes whether ever there ſhall be one or no: Yet this proves not, but that, if it can be had, it may lawfully be made uſe of, and looked on as an Ordinance of God, with expectation of Gods ſpeciall Preſence, Aſſiſtance, and Bleſſing, as in other Ordinances; and that a Synod of ſeverall Nations may be made uſe of, in ſuch a meaſure as may be obtained. For God, having given ſufficient warrant for *combinations* and *communion* of Churches, for their mutuall good, and not having *limited* it to ſuch or ſuch Bounds, beyond which

they may not exceed; doth sufficiently warrant it in the *greatest* Proportions that may be obtained, even of the whole *Oecumenick* Church. And our *Brethren* must admit this in their way; for they having, as they conceive, a warrant for going out to *advise with other Churches*, and not being *bounded*, either *how often* they may so goe forth, nor to *how many Churches*; they conceive it lawfull upon this warrant electively to advise with *all* the Churches in a *Province*, a *Nation*; yea, the *Christian world*: And they doe not thinke, that the *defect of Opportunity* thus to advise, perhaps for some hundreds of years, doth make such advising to be *unlawfull*, or not agreeable to Gods institution, if it could be had; though it may perhaps render it *difficult*, if not *impossible*. For we may not presse that Principle (of Gods *Suiting his Providences to his Institutions*) so far, as if God were bound in his *Providence* to afford at all times an *opportunity*, for doing of whatsoever by his *Institution* might lawfully be done. We know the *Arminians* have made an ill use of such a Principle in the point of Universall Grace, *quia Deus non deficit in necessariis ad salutem*: And it were hard either for us, or for our *Brethren* to admit such a Principle in the matter in hand; That nothing is *agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God*, but what hath had, and shall have *an existence in all Ages*. Our *Brethren* hold *Ruling Elders* to be not only Agreeable to, and Warranted by the Word of God, but of *Divine Institution*; and yet we think they will not say, They have an *existence* at *all* times in *all* their Churches. And we suppose also, they will hardly prove that in all the reign of Antichrist; every Ordinance of Christ had such existence as they require here to be shewed of Oecumenicall Synods.

Preface to M. *Cottons* Keyes.

2. But if this Principle were good; then doe our *Brethren* apparently overthrow the Consequence of their owne Argument: For how easie is it to reply to that Argument, That though there be, and ought to be a subordination of *Congregationall*, *Classicall*, *Provinciall*, and *Nationall* Assemblies in this Kingdome, where the Providence of God, which is suitable to his Institutions, hath afforded a Possibility and Opportunity of them; yet no necessity of their dependence on, or subordination to an *Oecumenick Councel*, which (by our Brethrens Argument) must not be accounted an *Institution*, because, if so, *the providence of God would so have provided that it might be alwayes existent*.

3. Yet withall, we must remember, that our Brethren (what even they here argue) doe not deny either the *lawfulnesse* of them, or the *usefulnesse* of them, but onely their *standing* use, and the *subordination* to them. Yet this Argument, if it prove any thing, proves that *they may not be at all*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, ſay our Brethren, *There muſt be an injurious independency ſet up in a Nationall Synod, becauſe when a man hath appealed from other Courts to it, and upon the ſentence thereof, comes to be Baniſhed, and have his Eſtate forfeited to the ruine of himſelf and his family; then moſt of all, he needs ſuch an effectuall remedy as a generall Councell, and loe it is not: And if the Nationall Aſſembly be Independent, and upon the ſentence thereof, the extremeſt puniſhment, but that of Death, be to be inflicted, it had need ſhew a Deſignment and Warrant from God, to be the Supream and Ultimate Court.*

Anſ. 1. Why did our *Brethren* except *that of Death?* When as Nationall Synods have as much power to inflict *Death*, as they have to inflict theſe puniſhments which they reckon up; *Baniſhment*, *Forfeiture of goods*, *The extremeſt Puniſhment but that of Death*. For they know that we doe not aſſert a power of inflicting either one or other of theſe, to be in Eccleſiaſticall Judicatory at all; nor is it practiced in the *Reformed Churches*: And why our *Brethren* ſhould goe about to caſt ſuch *odious inſinuations*, without a cauſe, both on us and them, we cannot tell. If it be, Becauſe that, after the Church hath paſſed their cenſure, the Magiſtrate doth ſometimes, when he ſeeth cauſe, and according as the offence deſerveth, adde his ſentence too, (yea, *Death* it ſelf, if he ſee cauſe, and the crime deſerve it:) This doth no way concerne the Nationall Aſſembly (or inferiour Aſſemblies) at all; to which no more belongeth under a *Chriſtian*, then under an *Heathen* Magiſtrate. Nor doth it more concerne *us*, then it doth concerne *their way*: For their *Apologeticall Narration*, *pag.* 19. informes us, that their Sentence of *Non-communion* may be aſſiſted and backed with the ſentence of the Magiſtrate, as well as *Excommunication*; and may in that reſpect, be made *as efficacious*: And we know that the practice in the Churches of *New-England*, is conſonant to it, where the *Civill Magiſtrate* doth with as much, if not more rigour and ſeverity, back their *Church-cenſures*, as in the *Reformed Churches* Governed by Presbyteries and Synods.

2. The Sentence of the *Nationall Aſſembly*, how *dreadfull and terrible* ſoever our *Brethren* pleaſe *here* to repreſent it, is no other then what They ſay belongs *every particular Congregation*: For *Excommunication* is their higheſt Cenſure, and this, ſay our *Brethren*, *every particular Congregation* may inflict. And if this be *Independency*, yea, an *injurious Independency*, that when this is inflicted by a National Aſſembly, there may be no Appeal from it; Why doe our *Brethren* complaine, that *that proud and inſolent title of* INDEPENDENCY *is affixed to them, as their claime*, *Apologeticall Narration*. pag. 23. when as they claim that, which themſelves

selves here call an *Injurious* INDEPENDENCY? For it is a principle of their way, That *from the sentence of Excommunication in a particular congregation, there is no Appeale*, nor is it *reversible by any power on earth, but themselves alone*. And for the *injuriousnesse* of such independency, we desire it may be considered, whether most injury is likely to be done, and remaine unredressed, where in a Nation *many thousand* Congregations, shall *each* of them have an *Independent* power of censuring *without Appeal*; or where the party aggrieved may *Appeal* from them to a *Classis*, from thence to a *Provinciall*, and from thence to a *Nationall* Assembly, though when he comes there, he can appeale no further? Especially, when as *men are oft imboldned to sin, when they know that none can judicially call them to account*: And, on the other side, the very remembrance or feare of an *Appeale*, whereby their actions may come to be scanned, is a great motive to make Judges proceed more righteously.

3. But we doe not assert, That a *Nationall Assembly* is *Independent*; but though we doe not think it fit to trouble an *Oecumenicall Councel* with every particular difference or controversie that may arise in a Church, (as neither to trouble a *Parliament* with every particularity of civill difference, which may be as well determined in inferiour Courts) yet in grave and weighty matters, we doubt not but there may be great use of a well constituted *Oecumenicall Assembly*, (if it may be had) and great help by it: and that a *Nationall Assembly* may be accountable to it, (at least as much as our Brethren hold a particular congregation to be accountable.) But if a person conceiving himselfe to be *injured* in a *Nationall Assembly* cannot obtaine redresse, either from *another* succeeding *Nationall* Assembly, or from a *superiour* Assembly, he must commit his cause to God; and so must he that may conceive himselfe wronged by a *Classicall* or *Provinciall* Assembly, if he cannot have the opportunity of appealing farther: In like manner, as he that thinks himselfe civilly injured by the *Parliament*, or Supreame power in a State, and hath no other way to obtaine redresse. Yet is not this a reason why we may not have recourse to *such wayes* of remedy as God *affords*, because there may be a *further* remedy, which God at present *affords not*? or because we are deprived of an appeale to an *Oecumenicall* Synod, which seldome, or never, or not without great difficulty can be had; therefore not to make use of *Provinciall* or *Nationall* Assemblies, and Appeales to them, a remedy which may oft and easily be had; or (in a civill way) because a *Parliament*, which is *remedium efficaciſſimum*, is not alwayes sitting, therefore not to make use of the benefit of *inferior Courts*: And yet the complaint may there possibly be as grievous as our *Brethren* here put the case

caſe, if a Perſon, by an inferior Judge or Corporation condemned to die, what he hath greateſt need of a relief, ſhall think with himſelf, There is yet a more efficacious remedy, (a Parliament) which both by the Law of God and Nature is more able to relieve me, and Lo It Is Not. Yea and in our Brethrens owne way; if a Church, after recourſe had, firſt to one, or more neighbour Churches, then to all in that Province or Nation, ſhall remaine unſatisfied as before; they may as well bewaile themſelves, that there is yet a further courſe of having recourſe to an Elective Oecumenicall Synod, which they might, by Chriſts Inſtitution have recourſe unto, and Lo It Is Not, it cannot be had.

The Anſwer to their Third Argument.

Their third Argument is thus framed: *That Church-power, which cannot ſhew a ſet and conſtant Divine Rule for its Variation, and Subordination, and Ultimate Independency, is not of God, and ſo may not be; But this variation of Church power into theſe Subordinations cannot ſhew any ſuch ſtedy and conſtant rule for theſe things*, Ergo.

Anſ. First, To their Major. If by a *ſet and conſtant rule*, they mean by a *particular & expreſſe* rule; we deny it; It is not neceſſary that there be a *particular expreſſe* rule for the *locall bounds* or *circumſtantiall variations* in Government. If they mean, the *generall rules* of the Word, applyed and made uſe of, with the help of *Prudence* and *Natures light*; we grant it, and it helps not their cauſe.

And as to the proof of their Major, *That God did never conſtitute a Church, but he gave the Bounds of it. That the change from Family Government to Nationall Government, amongſt the Jewes, was by Gods appointment. That in the New Teſtament there is a Reed to meaſure the Temple.* We ſay, That God never did, either in the *Conſtitution* or *Alteration* of Jewiſh Church Government or any other, ſet out by *particular expreſſe* Rules, all the *Circumſtantiall variations* of it, ſuch as our Brethren require of us. And that of *meaſuring the Temple with a Reed*, proves no ſuch thing; for whether that be meant of Gods *Seperating the Inviſible Saints* from the Antichriſtian Apoſtacy, and preſerving them during Antichriſts reigne; or of *reſtoring his Church againe* after that time (as men uſe to meaſure the ground they intend to build upon;) or comprehend an *order for the Government* of the viſible Politicall Church, as our Brethren would have it, (which we need not ſtand now to inquire into;) yet it no wayes holds out *all locall and Circumſtantiall variations*; which God hath no where determined either in the Old or New-Teſtament, but left things of that nature under generall rules.

2. To their Minor we Answer, 1. That it is as much against their way as ours; All that they can say for the *setting out the bounds of Particular Congregations* and *Elective Synods*, will not amount to an *expresse particular rule* for *all circumstantiall variations*. All that which they say for the *Bounds of a* PARTICULAR CONGREGATION (in their *Reasons* against our alledging, *Act.* 15. for proof of this proposition) is no more but this, *such as live so, as conveniently to meet in one place* (which yet perhaps will hardly agree with the bounds of some of their Congregations;) but whether they must be *threescore, fourscore, one hundred, two hundred,* or *a hundred ninety and nine,* or more or lesse; whether they must all live within *one* mile, *two* miles, *three* miles compasse or more or lesse, or may live *twenty, thirty, fourty* miles or *more* a sunder (as is seen in some Congregations now adayes;) whether a thousand persons should be divided into *three* or *four*, or *five*, or more, or fewer Congregations; and whether this or that *man* must joyne himselfe to *this* or *that*, or a *third* Congregation; what is there in all these particulars, and many more, that must determine it, but *Generall Rules of the Word*, and *principles of Prudence*, and the *light of Nature*, as may best stand with *convenience* and *edification*? And for the *Bounds of* ELECTIVE SYNODS, when a Church stands in need of Advice or Arbitration, there is nothing in the Word of God to determine particularly, whether they must go out to This or That, or a Third Church first; or, whether to One, or More at once; Or, if not satisfied upon the first Advise, whether they may goe out a Second, a Third, a Fourth time; or how Often, or, to how Many Churches; Or, if *One* Church be offended with the practice of a great Many Churches, whether they may, or must call them All to Account *one by one*, or two, three, four or more *at once*, and how *often* they may, or must so doe; Or, if *Many* Churches be offended with the practices of One Church, whether each of them *singly* must call that Church to an account, or two, three, four, or more *together*; & whether after account given to *some* of these Churches they may a second, a third, a fourth time be called to give an account to *others*: There is nothing in all these cases, that can afford a *particular expresse set standing Rule* to proceed by, but onely as by the Generall Rules of Scripture, the Light of Nature, and Principles of Prudence shall appear most to conduce to Edification, determining Controversies, removing Offences, preserving of Peace, &c. the *very same Rules* by which we must go in determining the Bounds, Number, Frequency, Gradations of Synods. For, that *Synods Ought to be*, or at least *May be* (which is all our Proposition asserts) we prove: That *such Churches and such a Number should associate, as may most Conveniently and Orderly*

Of

...ointed for the best effecting of those ends for which Synods are appointed, ...but the Generall Rule of Scripture: That they be Provinciall, Natio... &c. is according to the different occasions and conditions of times ...d places; and are to be set up, bounded, circumstantiated, as may be ...st for Edification, and according to the Prudent consent and agree... ...ent of the Churches, together with the help and power of the Chri... ...an Magistrate when it may be had: And as in other Bodies Politick, ...nies, Armies, &c. their Subordinations are cast for the good of the ...le; So should it be in the Church of Christ, which being the most ...fect Republicke, doth comprehend in it whatsoever is excellent in all other ...dges Politicke.

See Robinsons Iustif. of Separat. pag. 113.

Next we examine our Brethrens *Confirmation of their Minor*; where... they go about to remove all things which they suppose to be the ...ture of framing these Subordinations; *not quâ greater number of Churches, not quâ in one Kingdome, not quâ in one Nation.* Wherein ...ey labour in vaine, while they take paines to remove those particulars ...ich were in the Debate disclaimed in the Assembly, from being the ...ture of framing these Subordinations; and in the meane time give no ...asons to overthrow that which then was, and now is, plainly owned ...the Rule on which we proceed. Yet since they please to insist upon ...ose particulars, and that the particulars of themselves, be of *some ...ight* (*ceteris paribus*) in order to a determination in point of *Conve...ence, Prudence, Edification*, &c. though not sufficient, *absolutely to de...mine* what ever else may counterbalance them; we shall follow ...em in it.

First they say, *Not quâ greater number of Churches, For then* 1. *there ...st be as many severall Subordinations, as there can be supposed variati... of Greater Numbers.*

Ans. We say not, *quâ greater number* simply (for then a *Nationall ...nod of one Kingdome*, consisting of a *greater* number, should binde a *...tionall Synod of another Kingdome* consisting of a *lesser* number) but, ...the *greater number of Churches So combined and associated for such ends*: ...s in a *Congregation*, or *Congregationall Eldership*, our Brethren will not ..., that the Greater number, *quâ Greater*, doth bind the Lesser, but the *...ater number of them So United.*

2. And whereas they demand, *where have we a Promise that God will ...more present with a Greater Part of them that* PROFESSE CHRISTI... NITY, *then with a Few?* We aske, Where God hath promised to be ...re present with the *greater part of a* CONGREGATION, then with a *Few*,

Few, suppose *two or three* gathered together in his Name? Or, whe
have we a promise that God will be *more present* with an ELECTIV
SYNOD *of many Churches*; then with the *Elders of a single Congregatio*
Or, where have we a promise, that upon a *second reference* God will
more present then upon a *first* reference? Yet they tell us afterwar
that *when offences are not healed, and one reference to other Churches is*
sufficient to cure them, there should be a seeking to others. We are not
prescribe God *how much* he shall be *present* with his Servants in such
such a way: But either we may expect, that God, who promiseth to
present with *every of his Servants*, will be *more present* with *more of the*
Or else, that the Wisedome and Graces of *Many of his Servants* in
way, will with the *same assistance*, better do the work, then the wisdom
and graces of *a few*, for God ordinarily works by meanes, (and if
were not so, we might as well refer matters of greatest consequenc
and difficulty to a *Few* as to *many*, to *Weak* persons, as to *wise and*
secret, upon this ground, Where have we a promise of Gods great
presence with the one then the other?) Or, when God calls to
greater Workes, we may expect *greater assistance*: Or at least, we are
doe our duty, in ordering of *Meanes*, so as may be *proportionate to the*
ends; and trust God to be *more or lesse present* as he pleaseth; w
may, upon Gods *generall promises*, expect a *Blessing* upon the use of
lawfull Meanes; else why should we rather *incounter an Enemy*, with
whole Army, then with a single *Brigade* or *Regiment*?

3. Whereas they adde, *That the greater number of Churches profe Sin*
Religion, and more corrupt, and it had been ill for Philadelphia *to be joyne*
in association with Laodicea, *or the* Calvinists *in Germany with the Luth*
rans. We Answer; If *all* Numbers of men that will call themselves
Church, must therefore be admitted into an *association* (how Corrupt o
Heretical soever) we grant such an inconvenience might follow: An
so (say we) it would be in a *Congregation*, if all be promiscuously ad
mitted to power in it; for the greater number of *Persons* that pretend t
professe Religion, are more corrupt: and yet can they alledge no bett
reason for *excluding any true* CHRISTIAN *from their* CHURCH
COMMUNION, then we for *leaving any true* CHURCH *out of* ASSOCI
ATION; yea, they professe as much in their *Apol. Narration*, pag. 11.
That their *Rule* of judging in admitting of members is of *that latitud*
as to take in *any the meanest, in whom there may be supposed to be the le*
of Christ; and their Rule for casting out of fellowship (by *Excommu*
nication) is for *no other kinde of sins, then may evidently be presumed to*
perpetrated against the parties known light; as if in manners and conver
tion, *such as is committed against the Light of Nature, or the common*
civi

ceived practices of Chriſtianity, profeſſed in all the Churches of Chriſt; or if in Opinions, then ſuch as are likewiſe contrary to the Received Principles of Chriſtianity, and the power of Godlineſſe, profeſſed by the party himſelf, and univerſally acknowledged in all the reſt of the Churches; and no other ſuch. And if our *Brethren* walking by this rule, can be yet in a ſufficient meaſure be ſecured, that the *greater number of* PERSONS in ſome of *their Congregations* may not be *the more corrupt*, and prejudice thoſe that *are more pure*; ſurely we may then hope, that if *our Synods* be made up of ſuch *Elders* as are deſcribed, 1 *Tim.* 3. and *Tit.* 1. (to which a tender reſpect is to be had) *we* may in a good meaſure *avoid that danger.* But there is farre more danger in our *Brethrens* way; for if an *Erroneous heretical Congregation* may (*electively*, as our *Brethren* ſpeak) *chooſe their own Judges*, we have little reaſon to beleeve, but that they will chooſe either *none at all*, or ſuch as they know before-hand, are likely to be *of their own Judgement.*

4. Say our Brethren, *ſuppoſe there be as many Elders and Churches more purely reformed in one Province, as in the reſt of the Nation beſides; why ſhould not God be thought to be as much with them, as with the National Aſſembly?*

Anſ. So he may, (God may be as much preſent poſſibly with *one Regiment*, as with the whole *Army* beſide;) and if he be *ſo preſent* with them, as to *enable them to doe their worke*, they *need not* then bring it to the *Nationall Aſſembly*; yet even then, the *reſt* of the Nation may have *need of Them.* There may poſſibly be, as many Able Knowing Chriſtians in ſome *one Family*, as in all the *reſt of a Congregation*, yet this hinders not their aſſociating into *one Church.*

5. Say they, *If* qua *greater, then the Decrees of* GENERALL COUNCELLS *in former Ages, (even thoſe that ſet up Biſhops and Popes) ſhould binde us more then* PROVINCIALL *or* NATIONAL SYNODS *now, at leaſt till repealed by another Generall Councell. As Acts of Parliament made by our Anneſtors, binde us till repealed.*

Anſwer. The Aſſembly hath not yet debated the Power of Generall Councells in making Laws, much leſſe of their binding after-Ages.

2. Nor doe we ſay, that *Councells* (either one or other) doe binde *abſolutely*, what ever their decrees be: But when they *Erre*, they are no otherwiſe binding, then as *Erring Eldership.*

3. Nor do the Decrees of *thoſe Councels* binde *Us*, except *vi materiæ*, who were not in Aſſociation with thoſe Churches, nor were either actually or virtually conſenting to them.

4. Nor do we grant that *ſuch Generall Councels* had a like *Legiſlative power* for *theſe Churches*, as the *Parliament* hath for the *Kingdome.*

Next, say our Brethren, *The Bounds and Limits of Assemblies being Ecclesiasticall, must not have their rise from Nationall or Politicall respects.* Antioch *sent to* Jerusalem, *not of the same Province or Nation, rather then* Syria, *or* Cilicia.

Ans. 1. We doe not bring *Acts* 15. for a pattern of a Synod, either *Provinciall* or *Nationall, as* Such; but as an instance of Churches *associated in a Synod:* And if not within the same either *Province* or *Nation*, then doth it give warrant for *Association of Churches*, even *beyond the bounds* of *one Nation.*

2. We doe not say, *quâ Province, quâ Nation, quâ Kingdome*; but, *as upon a due weighing of these, and other particulars shall appear most for the good of the Church.*

But we say, 3. That the *Churches in one Kingdome*, (having more communion with *each other*, then with *Churches of another Kingdome*) are (ordinarily) *fittest to associate*, and to be most immediately helpfull one to another.

4. We say, that the *concurrent assistance* or *opposition* of the *State and Magistrate*, may make Associations, either in the *same* Nation, or with *other* Nations, more or lesse *expedient*; and variation in *expediency* may cause a variation in the *Boundings and Limits* of Synods.

And for that question, why *Antioch sent not to the Churches of* Syria *and* Cilicia, *rather then to* Jerusalem, *which was neither in the same Province nor Nation?*

We Answer; Whether it were, 1. Because that *Aram* or *Syria* being *so large and vast*, containing not only *Cœlesyria*, in which *Antioch* was, but also *Mesopotamia, Phœnicia*, and some other regions; And *Cilicia* likewise (of which *Tarsus* was the *Metropolis*) being very large, (and *to which* Antioch *did not belong*, either as a Province or Nation, as our *Brethren* seeme to suppose;) those Churches could either *not at all*, or not so *conveniently*, or not so *soone* be gathered into a *Synod*: Or, 2. Because those Churches being *troubled with the same Errours* (as it appears they were) and stood in need, as well as *Antioch*, of seeking the advise and helpe of other Churches: Or, whether 3. Those Churches being *but new planted*, were not yet formed into such *Subordinations*: Or, whether 4. Those Churches had *already met in Synods*, and the debates and results at *Antioch*, were the debates and results not of *One Church*, but of a *Synod of Elders from severall of those Churches*, and yet unable to determine that controversie; (for 1. *Others*, beside *Paul* and *Barnabas* were *sent to Jerusalem*: And 2. *other Churches* were *troubled with these Errours*, and their troubles *represented to the Synod at Jerusa-*

lem: And 3. the *Returne* made, and *Letters* directed *to thoſe Other Churches*, to the Churches of *Antioch, Syria* and *Cilicia*: And 4. *Judas and Silas Sent to Them* with theſe Letters; and yet, when the Letters are delivered and read at *Antioch*, the Meſſengers *ſit downe and make their abode There*, as having performed their whole truſt, without further travelling about *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, though the Brethren of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, as well as thoſe of *Antioch*, are told in theſe Letters, that *together with* Paul *and* Barnabas, *they had ſent* Judas *and* Silas To THEM, *who ſhould tell them the ſame things, by mouth*.) Or, whether 5. for ſome other reaſon; We are not able poſitively to determine. Onely, in generall; we ſay, *The Reaſon* why they had Recourſe unto, or did Aſſociate with the Church at *Jeruſalem*, (and perhaps thoſe of *Judea* too) for making Decrees (in matter of common concernment) obligatory to all thoſe Churches of *Antioch, Syria*, and *Cilicia*; was, *Becauſe this did appear the moſt Expedient and Conducing for thoſe ends*, of *Edifying* thoſe Churches, *Compoſing* their *Differences*, and *Removing* their *Errors*. And the *ſame rule* are We to obſerve in our Aſſociations.

And as to that, of *the Kingdome of Iſrael, breaking into Two Kingdomes, while yet the Church-ſtate in their Subordinations altered not*. We Anſwer,

1. Whether it did, or did not, is not much materiall to our purpoſe; For we doe not ſay, That the Bounds of a Kingdome, *quâ Kingdome*, muſt be the Bounds of an Aſſociation (but that there may be Aſſociations *larger* and *leſſer* then of *one Kingdome*;) but, That this is one particular, conſiderable amongſt others in point of Expediency and Edification.

2. As for *thoſe Services*, which by Gods appointment, were to be done *onely at Jeruſalem*, the reaſon is plaine of their not altering, becauſe there was but *one Jeruſalem*, the *onely place* which God had choſen to put his name there: But that *nothing* concerning the *locall Bounds*, or *other Circumſtances* belonging to their Government, *admitted variation upon that Change*, is more then our *Brethren* can prove.

To what they next adde, that *If this* INDEPENDENCY *ariſe from the Magiſtrates, then there is no need of ſuch ſubordinations, becauſe (in experience) Reformed Churches abroad are well enough governed without theſe Subordinations*; Geneva *hath no Appeals, having but one Claſſis, and why may not other Churches be governed as well without them, if the Magiſtrate overſee them, and keep each to their duties*; *The Churches in the* Low-countries *want Nationall Synods, and yet are peaceably Governed*; *yea, ſome of them are without Provinciall, and ſay, if they can, they will never have more*. We Anſwer,

1. If the Churches in *Geneva*, and the *Low-Countries* be WELL ENOUGH *governed*, then are *Churches under a* PRESBYTERIAL GOVERNMENT *well enough Governed*: Yea, then is there no need of ELECTIVE SYNODS, for those Churches have none.

2. We plead not for INDEPENDENCY, but for a *Subordination upon Association, when it may be had.*

3. Our question is not about the *Power of the Magistrate*, but about an *Ecclesiastick obligation, by vertue of Church-principles, such as might have agreed to the primitive Churches before the Magistrate was Christian*, as our *Brethren* themselves have noted.

4. If *Geneva* doe not altogether associate with those under another Civill Government, lest perhaps, they might prejudice their civill liberties; or for some other inconvenience which may over-balance it; yet they *doe associate with the Reformed Churches of France*, as much as they can, and *send Commissioners to their Nationall Synods*: And *Beza* hath *been President* in some of them.

5. If the Low-Countries *Want* Nationall Synods, why doe our *Brethren* say, they are well enough Governed without them? If by *Want*, they doe not imply a *Need* of them, but, that *they have them not*; then is it not true: For in the Low-Countries *they have Nationall Assemblies*, though of late there have bin some interruptions in their meetings, and they have not, as formerly, met every three year. And the *seldome meeting*, either of their Nationall or Provinciall Synods is their *prejudice*, not their *gaine*; and an affliction of spirit to their godly Pastors and People. But whereas our *Brethren* adde, that *some* (*Churches*) *of them, say, If they can, they will never have more*: We know that the *Socinians* and *Arminians* have complained of Synods, and laboured with all their might, to hinder the convening of them; but that *Others*, at least, that *other* CHURCHES have so said; we doe no more believe, then we doe what hath been said by some others, *That some of them have desired the Episcopall Government*; nor are bound to answer for the one, more then for the other.

6. But let it be granted, That *some* Reformed Churches, (which *could not* have them) have not had *all* these sorts of Assemblies; it doth not follow, that therefore, *those who can* have them, must yet forbear. *Some* Churches have not *Ruling Elders*, some Churches have no *Elective Synods*; yet our *Brethren* will not say, that therefore *No* Churches *may* have them.

In the last place, say our *Brethren*; As not from Politicall, so *neither from Nationall respects, are these bounds to be fetched*; *For then* 1. *the Calvinists*

niſts in Germany, *muſt be ſubject to a greater number of Lutherans*; *and all Miniſters in England muſt aſſociate, of which the greater number will be the worſe: Or, if becauſe the Calviniſts profeſſe a further Reformation, they are diſobliged from ſuch an Aſſociation, then ſo are thoſe, who in a Nation profeſſe a further Reformation: And Uniformity of principles is a more intimate bond of ſuch Aſſociation, then ſuch extrinſecall reſpects. 2. If one Nation or Principality, then* Wales *muſt be Independent. 3. If quâ Nation of the ſame tongue or kindred, then muſt the ſcattered Jews have made one Church diſtinct, from thoſe with whom they did cohabite. Or 4. If quâ Nation or People, dwelling within the ſame Nationall bounds, then muſt thoſe Jews make up one Church with thoſe Nations; whereas* Peter, James, *and* Paul *to the* Hebrews *writes to them apart, as Churches in all Nations.*

Anſ. Theſe are but light exceptions. For 1. Though the *Churches in a Nation* be bound to *aſſociate*, if they can; yet not *quâ one Nation*, (that reſpect of *Nation* or *Principality*, being *extrinſecall to the Church*, and *accidentall*) but *quâ ſuch a number, and in ſuch bounds, as may be moſt conveniently joyned for the beſt improvement of Synodicall Government.*

2. Nor doe we ſay, *All Miniſters muſt promiſcuouſly be admitted as members in Synods*, no more then that, *All pretended Chriſtians may be admitted to all Church-Communion in Congregations.*

3. Nor doe we deny, but *Uniformity in Principles* ought, among other things, to be duly weighed in reference to Aſſociation; (and our Brethren might as well have ſhewed their Reaſons, why *That* may not be a rule to be made uſe of in Aſſociations, as thoſe that they have ſingled out;) And our *Brethren* know that the reaſon why the *beſt Reformed Churches* in *Germany* (which our *Brethren* call *Calviniſts*) doe not *Aſſociate* with the *Lutherans*, (though they doe admit amicable conferences and debates with them) is, Becauſe of the *great differences between them*, not only about *Church-Government*, but in *weighty Points of Doctrine.*

4. Yet we do not ſay, That a *bare Profeſſion* of a *Further Reformation*, will *diſoblige from Aſſociation*; nor doe we beleeve our *Brethren* will ſay it; for, by the ſame reaſon, they muſt ſay, that *if ſome of their own members profeſſe a further Reformation, they may, thereupon, diſſent from them.*

5. That of *Wales*, hurts not us; for if they may *conveniently Aſſociate*, their being a *diſtinct principality*, will not hinder it: If by reaſon of their *Language*, or the like, they *cannot*; yet this hinders not, but that they, *who can*, may Aſſociate: Their *ſuppoſed Independency* toucheth not us, who hold *no* Independency.

6. The *dispersed Jewes* (for any thing our *Brethren* can shew to t
contrary) might be *associated with those Churches amongst which they*
cohabite, (Christ having taken away the difference between Jew a
Gentile:) And, for ought we know, when *Paul* wrote to *all the Ch*
ches in Galatia, as *one lump*, They might be comprehended with the re
Sure we are, that the *Errours* in the Churches of *Galatia* about *Circu*
cision, and other *Jewish rites*, were too much associated with the *Erro*
of Jews, who lived among them: And if so, then *Peter* writing to t
dispersed Jews in *Galatia*, &c. did not write to them, as a *distinct Chu*
not associated. And we think our *Brethren* cannot well say the contra
unlesse they intend to grant, *That in the Church of Ephesus* (to say n
thing of other Churches) *there were at least* Two *Congregations*, one
Jews, another of *Greeks*; for that there were in *Ephesus*, both *Jews*
Greeks, we beleeve they will not deny.

The Answer to their Fourth Argument.

Their Fourth Argument lies thus, *That Government which neces*
produceth representations of spirituall power, out of other representations, w
a derived power therefrom; there is no warrant for: But these Sub
dinations of Synods, Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall, for the Gove
ment of the Church, doe so. For if all Churches in the severall Provin
be subject to the Nationall Assembly, and all, in severall Nations to an Oec
menicall, then must they all be interessed in that Nationall or Oecumenic
Assembly, and involved in it, as the Shires are involved in the Parliamen
ry power. Which interest must arise, either by an immediate choice (as Pa
liament men are chosen immediately by those they represent) which cannot
here, for the Congregations of a Province do not meet for such choice of tho
who shall represent them in the Nationall Assembly: Or else those cho
by the Congregations to represent them in the Provinciall Assembly, cho
some few of themselves to represent them in the Nationall; and so
of the Nationall Assembly to represent them all in the Oecumenic
Which may not be, both because there is no warrant for any delegated
wer at all in spirituall matters, all ministers being immediately Chri
vicarii; and because representations, as reflexions, grow still weaker,
higher they go, and are but a shadow of the first shadow: Yet the whole
wer that can be supposed to belong to the whole substance, is ascribed to the
But if these few, in a Generall or Nationall Councell binde all those Na
ons or Provinces under them. Then 1. They must be supposed to hav
promise and assistance answerable; not only to Judge as Elders, whic
their Office; and according to their Personall Abilities being thus calle

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doe their advise, (which two are granted;) but such a superadded assistance as holds proportion to that Spirituall bulk and body which they represent: And such is twice intimated to be with the Sanedrim, Deut. 17. *Thou shalt goe to the place which God shall chuse, and doe according to the sentence which they shall shew.* 2. *They have each of them in such an assembly, a power parallel to that of Bishops, and Arch-bishops, who challenge in Councels to represent their Churches.* 3. *They must then be a Church, and a body to Christ, which they are not.*

Ans. 1. We cannot but observe, that our Brethren doe neither content themselves with the Question as *stated by the Assembly*, (who being to advise concerning a Church Government for *this Kingdome*, speak nothing of a Subordination to *Oecumenick Councels*;) nor yet are constant to their *own stating* it, but sometimes (as in their third Argument) dispute against the Assembly, as *denying such Subordination*, and call for proof of *an ultimate Independency in a Nationall Synod*; and sometimes (as in this Argument) they dispute *against Subordination to Oecumenick Councels*, as if the Proposition had asserted it.

2. We observe that neither this, nor any of the former Arguments, are framed against the *Subordination of Congregationall and Classicall Assemblies, to Synods*, (which the Proposition affirmes) but onely of *Synods amongst themselves, Provinciall* to *Nationall*, and both to *Oecumenicall*; the latter of which the proposition meddles not with.

3. For Answer; we say, that when severall Churches send *choice men* to act thus in a *Classis*; and severall Classes send choice men to *Provinciall Synods*; and they to a *Nationall*. These Representations are not (as our *Brethren* suppose) *shadows of shadows*, but as *Gold extracted out of Gold*, which the oftner it is refined, the *purer* it is; or *Chymicall extractions*, whereof the last and highest is the most strong and precious.

4. And *some Representations* of this nature our *Brethren* cannot deny, both in their single *Congregations*, and in their *Elective Synods*. For

1. In their Congregations, *All have not authority to vote*, as women and children; yet because the CHURCH *is said to doe it*, and *All* (women as well as others) *are obliged*, the VOTERS *must necessarily* REPRESENT *the* WHOLE CHURCH: And when any of those, who have power to vote, are *Absent*, (which cannot be avoided, by reason of sicknesse, or the like, especially if persons dwelling at 40 miles distance, or more, are yet standing members of a Congregation) the PRESENT *Voters* must REPRESENT *those* REPRESENTERS *also*; and if those *Present Voters* do not all agree, the *Major part* of these must Represent *them All*.

2. And

2. And when these *Representers* send any of their *Delegates* to Act and Vote in an *Elective Synod*, these *Delegates* doe represent *all* the former *Representers*; and why may not *ten* Churches meet to *delegate some from them All*, and send them to a Synod of an *hundred* Churches, as well as *Antioch* send from that *one* Church to *Jerusalem*?

5. Nor doth this at all hinder it, That *they are immediately Christi Vicarii*: For though the *power of such an office* be immediately from Christ, yet the *designing of such a Person* to that Office, and *Imploying him, hic et nunc*, to preach the Word, or performe such an act of Government, for the good and edification of those that send him, is not immediately from Christ.

6. But here we must observe likewise, that our *Brethren* dispute not against the Subordination or power of these Synods, or the standing use of them, but against the Being of them; and not of these onely, but of their owne Elective Synods; for how can a Church or Churches goe forth Electively to one Elective Synod of all the Churches in a Province or a Nation; yea, of all the world, (as our *Brethren* grant they may) without representations, yea, representations of representations? For we doe not beleeve their meaning to be thus; that if ten Churches see cause to goe forth for light, to all the Churches of a Province or Nation, by way of an Elective Synod; then all, and every member of these ten Churches must in person repair to a meeting of all the members of those Churches in a Province or Nation in one body.

As to that Demand of our Brethren; *Where is there a promise of such an Assistance as holds proportion with the Whole Nation?* We Answer The *Promise of Christ is One and the Same to All the Officers*; from the Apostles to the Pastor and Teacher; *I will be with you alwayes, to the end of the world*: And *Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them*: Which he useth to make good in proportion to the worke he sets them upon. He doth not give a *distinct Promise* to *each Officer*, (I will be present with an *Apostle* in such a proportion, with an *Evangelist* in such a proportion, and with a *Pastor* or *Elder* in such a proportion;) much lesse doth he give *speciall promises* to *each Act* belonging to the *same Office*, (I will be thus far present with a Pastor in *teaching*, thus far in *visiting the sicke*, thus far in *admonishing, reproving, comforting*, thus far in *ruling his own Congregation*, and thus far when called to governe or advise in reference to *other Congregations*:) but *That one Promise* is sufficient ground for *each Officer*, in *every act* of his Office to expect a Blessing proportionable to the Work he is imployed in. Nor will our *Brethren* we beleeve, undertake to produce

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ſpeciall promiſe; How far Chriſt will be preſent *with an Elective Synode*, more then he was *with the Church or Churches that repair to them*; or How much more he will be preſent with a Synod of *ten* Churches then of *two*.

But if our *Brethren* think, that if a *company of Miniſters* be ſent to a Synod, *in the name of ſo many Churches*, or to *repreſent* thoſe Churches, or the Miniſters in them; they muſt be then looked upon, as having *All the Light, Graces, Gifts, and Conſciences* of all thoſe Churches, and muſt have as *large Aſſiſtance* from God, as if they had ſo: We acknowledge no *ſuch repreſentation* as this, either in, or out of Synods; and therefore need not ſeeke for a promiſe of *ſuch aſſiſtance*. If a *Miniſter*, as the Mouth of the *people*, indite and utter a *prayer* to God *in their name*, or *on their behalf*; though in ſo doing, he may be ſaid to *repreſent the people*, (as well, as when the Prieſts offered up ſacrifices in the behalf, either of the people, or of particular perſons;) he is not yet looked upon, as *having All the gifts and graces of that people*, whoſe mouth he is, and an Aſſiſtance anſwerable; but is to imploy *That Light and Grace, and Abiling, that Chriſt hath beſtowed on Him* for their good; (And ſo, if he pray to God in the behalf of an abſent Perſon, a Church, a Kingdome:) And in the like manner muſt he doe, when in a SYNOD (Provinciall, Nationall, or Oecumenicall) he acts *in the name*, and *for the good* of ſuch Churches, by ſpecial Delegation or Appointment of him to that purpoſe.

Nor was it otherwiſe in the *High Prieſts* offering ſacrifices, or making Atonement for the *Whole People*; who was not therefore to be looked upon, as *having Gifts and Graces equal to thoſe of the Whole People*, (though the *Sacrifices* there offered, and the *Atonement* made, were *Accepted for the Whole*;) no more then if a *King*, or ſingle *Miniſter* ſhould make Prayers to God, in the behalf of his *Kingdome* or *Congregation*, and be Heard in ſuch requeſts. Neither was the *Sanedrim* to be looked upon, as having All the *Grace, Juſtice, Wiſdome* of the whole Nation, though they were by Gods appointment the *higheſt Court*; but onely an Aſſiſtance *ſutable to the work which God called them to*: Nor will the Text alledged out of *Deut.* 17. (where they are bid to *go up to the place which God ſhall chooſe*, and to *doe according to the ſentence which they ſhall ſhew*) prove more. And ſo far is that from making *againſt* what we aſſert, that it makes much *for* us: For though the *Place* (Jeruſalem) and the *Perſon* (the *High Prieſt*) were *Typicall*, and ſo *ceaſed*; yet the *Buſineſſe it ſelf*, (of hearing Appeales, redreſſing Injuries, expediting of difficult caſes, &c.) are things of a *Morall* nature, and there is the like need of proviſion for them *now*, as there was *then*.

As to what they next adde, *That this makes them in these Assemblies so many Arch-bishops or Bishops:* We Answer, No more then *every Elder* in one of our Brethrens *Congregations* joyning in the *Presbytery* may be judged *Popes* in their owne parish; nor so much neither, as might be easily shewed if it were needfull to make Retortions of this nature. But we have often spoken to this comparison, which our *Brethren* so much delight in; though yet they would not take it well to be so often told, How near their way comes (and in how many principles) to that of *Brownists* or *Anabaptists*; and, What might be said *more plausibly* for *Brownists* Tenents wherein they differ, then for Theirs. Yea, and themselves acknowledging *Elective Synods* of Elders, who may (authoritatively) *Teach, and Declare men Subverters of the faith, Fit to be excommunicated*, &c. would not yet be willing to be charged to set up so many *Bishops* or *Arch-Bishops* in *those branches of Authority* which Bishops challenge to themselves.

To their last exception, That *if these representations having the power of all the Churches in the Nation be warrantable, they must be a* CHURCH, *and a body to Christ, &c.* We Answer, (as often times in this case) That we doe not enquire for *Names*, but Things. That *there may be Synods thus collected*, our *Brethren* doe not deny; but say, they are usefull *for finding out, and declaring of truth in difficult cases, for healing offences, &c.* whether they will say such a Synod is a *Church*, or is a *Body to Christ*, we will not contend; if They may be so called, then so may the Synods we contend for; if not, then their Arguments hurts not us more then themselves, for then (by this Argument) neither are *their* Synods warrantable. But their *Consequence* will no way follow; for our *Brethren* assert often, That every Apostle *had the power of all Churches*, not onely *in a Nation*, but in the WORLD, and *their acts did oblige them to Subjection*: Yet will not our *Brethren* say, That every Apostle is a *Church*, or *is so called*, or *is a Body to Christ*. And in every of their Congregations, where they suppose the *Elders and Brethren*, without the women and children, have the *whole Church-power*; we need but turne their words upon themselves, *If these representers* (Elders and Brethren, without the women, and children) *having the power of all the* persons in that Congregation, *were warrantable, they must be a Church*; *Now, besides that they are no where so called, if they were called so, then they are a Body to Christ, for so every Church is, and where is Christ said to have a representative Body of his Body? And yet so they must be, or they have not the power of all the* members of that Church *in them, nor otherwise doe their acts oblige them to subjection*: And when our *Bre.* have thought of an Answer in

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this caſe, we doubt not but they may ſee the *ſame Anſwer will ſerve our turne.* That the *Elders and Brethren without the women and children* are a *Church*, we ſuppoſe they will not ſay; for if ſo, then either the *women and children* are of *no* Church, or of *another* Church; that they are of *no Church* we beleeve they will not ſay; nor can they ſay, that they are of *another Church*, unleſſe they will ſay, *that one Church governs another*, that the *Church of Elders and Brethren*, governs the *Church of women and children*: If they ſay, That *the Elders and Brethren, together with the women and children* make but *One Church*; and yet, though the *women and children* act not, yet the *Church* is ſaid to act thus and thus, when *thoſe in the Church* doe thus act, *who have authority and commiſſion ſo to doe*; we ſay ſo to: And then the queſtion will be this, Not *whether thoſe who act are a Church*; but *Who thoſe are in the Church that ought to act.*

The *Anſwer to our Brethrens* Reaſons, againſt the allegation of *Acts* 15. for the Subordination of Synods, Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall.

WE cannot but wonder to ſee our *Brethren* ſo frequently run upon groſſe *miſtakes*, and *miſ-recitings* of our Propoſitions and Proofes. We ſay nothing in any of our Propoſitions concerning *Subordination to* OECUMENICK Synods, but only of *Congregationall, Claſſicall, Provinciall, and Nationall Aſſemblies* amongſt themſelves; but inſtead of *Congregationall and Claſſicall*, our *Brethren* adde *Oecumenicall*: Nor did we alledge *Acts* 15. for a proof of any *Subordination* at all; nor ſo much as for the being of *Provinciall or Nationall* Aſſemblies, *as ſuch*, but onely for the *Lawfulneſſe of* SYNODS; (That *the Scripture holdeth forth another ſort of Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church, beſide Congregationall and Claſſicall, which we call Synodicall;*) a Propoſition to which our *Brethren* entred *no Diſſent*, nor (ſo far as we can remember) did give any *negative Vote*. For, That *there are Synods held forth in Scripture*, our Brethren grant; (and That *they are an holy Ordinance* of God;) & That *they are proved by this place*: but, whether *Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall*; whether *Standing*, and *Subordinate*; or *Occaſionall*, and *Elective*; whether to *Excommunicate*, or to *Adviſe*, &c. that Propoſition ſpeaks not. So that this Text is brought by us to prove

no more then what they *acknowledge to be truth*, and what they affirme *to be proved from it.*

But say they, *this one example cannot prove both Presbyteries and Synods, but if we lean to the one, we must quit the other.*

Answ. 1. Nor is it brought by us to prove both; We brought it before to prove, that *the Elders of* Jerusalem *did performe acts of Government over more Congregations then one*; and it is brought now to prove the *Lawfulnesse of Synods*, which may both very well stand together. 2. At least, some passages in this Chapter may prove the *one*, and some the *other*, without any inconsistence. 3. Yea further, if it be sufficient to prove, that *Churches, at so great a distance*, may joyne in a *Synod*; it will prove *à fortiori*, that *neighbour Churches* may joyn in a *Classis*.

They say further, *That this Assembly*, Acts 15. *was not a formall Synod, but onely a reference by the particular Church of* Antioch, *to the particular Church of* Jerusalem.

Answ. Whether either *Antioch* or *Jerusalem* were a *particular Church*, (in our Brethrens sense) or, whether this reference were made onely from *Antioch*, and not from any other *Church or Churches* assembled there, either in a Classis or a Synod, it is not needfull now to dispute: Nor whether this meeting at *Jerusalem* were a *formall Synod*. Our *Brethren* grant, That a Synod is an holy Ordinance of God; and That it may be proved from this place: But whether the instance be a *formall Synod*, or onely a *sufficient Warrant for a Synod*, is to our purpose all one.

But say our Brethren; *If it had been a Synod, yet* 1. *Neither Provinciall nor Nationall.*

Answ. 1. Nor doe we say that it was a *Provinciall or Nationall Synod*; But, though it were neither Provinciall nor Nationall, yet it might be a *Synod*; which is enough to our purpose, who bring this, onely to prove, That *there may be Synods.*

2. If (according to our *Brethrens* Principles) this meeting, though *formally not a Synod*, might yet be a *sufficiant warrant for a Synod*, (yea, for a *multiplicity of Synods*, in case the first Synod be not able to do the work) then this Synod, though it were not *formally* either *Provinciall* or *Nationall*, may yet be a *sufficient warrant for both*: For if we be bound precisely to follow this example, in All the Circumstances of it, without *any circumstantiall variation*, then cannot our *Brethren* approve of *Elective* FORMALL *Synods* under colour of this example, which,

say

they, was not a *Formall* Synod: Nor may they, in case the *first* Elective Synod doe not satisfie, have recourse to a *second*, (which yet here they say, they may) because those of *Antioch rested in this first* solution.

They adde, *Neither 2. was it a standing Synod, (which the word Subordination doth imply) but Elective; and that, but for this one Question without obligation to referre All other matters to them in an ordinary way.*

Ans. 1. Our *Brethren* should not dispute against the *Subordination* of Synods in this place; For *Acts* 15. was not by us brought to prove the *Subordination*, but the *Being* of Synods.

2. Nor doth the word SUBORDINATION prove, that they must needs be STANDING *Synods*; more then the Subordination of *Inferiour Courts to the Parliament*, proves that the *Parliament* must needs be a *Standing Court* and not *Occasionall*.

3. Nor is there such a *materiall difference* between *Standing* Synods and *Occasionall*, in regard either of their *Lawfulnesse*, or their *Power*: unlesse our *Brethren* think, that a *Triennial* or *Standing Parliament* be *substantially different*, in point of lawfulnesse and power, from *Occasionall Parliaments*, and that, though the fundamentall Laws of a Kingdome should warrant the One, yet they would not therefore warrant the Other. We know not, but that *Occasionall* and *Standing* Synods are of the like Divine Authority; and our *Brethren* have as yet made very little Objection against it. Nor doe those of *New-England* make any such difference; see *Cottons Keyes*, pag. 48. *Answer to* 32. *Questions*, pag. 64.

They adde, *Nor 3. was there a Multiplicity of Synods, but onely one, in whose Judgement those of* Antioch *rested*, 4. *Much lesse a Contignation of Synods, Superiour and inferiour.*

Ans. Yet say our Brethren in the next words; *when offences are not healed, and one reference to other Churches is not sufficient to cure them, there should be a seeking to others*: so that this Instance of *One*, is a sufficient warrant for a *Multiplicity*, by their own grant: (And if the first Synod be able to dispatch the businesse, we doe no more plead for a needlesse carrying it further, then themselves doe.) But in case there be reason after the first Reference or Appeal, to whom should they next goe? The Text is wholly silent; there is nothing for direction, but Generall Rules of Scripture, together with principles of Prudence, and the Light of Nature, to judge of what is most for convenience.

Order, and Edification; which all will perswade rather to seeke high
then lower: And not we only (with other reformed Churches) b
Mr. *Cotton*, with the Divines of *New England*, do argue from hence,
a parity of reason, for a *Contignation*, even to an *Oecumenicall* Counc
as upon a Morall and Perpetuall ground. But, Whether this assoc
ting must *needs* be of *Neighbour Churches*, and, Whether of *All Churc*
promiscuously without election; hath been spoken to before. Wh
ther they have power to bind *sub pena* (as our *Brethren* speake) p
taines not to this question, either about the *Being* of Synods, or of th
Subordination; nor do our *Brethren* here object against it.

But because our *Brethren* insist on this, that *Synods must be* EL
CTIVE; we shall speake somewhat more to it.

If by *Election*, they had meant, an Association of Churches who m
in a Synod, *by their owne mutuall consent and choice*, to determine, a
manage matters of difficulty, &c. there had been no difference betwe
us; We thinke that Churches should *voluntarily agree* into such Assoc
tions, as well as Persons ought voluntarily to associate into Congre
tions, so as may be most for generall edification: yet is not the *one* n
the *other* a matter of *choice*, but of *Duty*.

But by *Election*, our *Brethren* meane, a *Reference made by a particu*
Church, whose the businesse is, *to some other Church or Churches of th*
owne choosing, and They to deale in it, *only so far*, as they Refer t
businesse unto them.

To which we say,

1. That we thinke our *Brethren are the first* that ever held out th
a kind of Synod.

2. Nor doth this place *Acts* 15. on which they ground it, spea
any thing of ELECTIVENESSE. It saith indeed, when there was
cause, a side or Faction in the Church that taught Errours against t
Doctrine of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, the Church concludes that *Paul* a
Barnabas with others of them should goe to *Jerusalem*; But no ment
on, that it was *meerely at their owne choice*, whether to *send or not* to se
or whether to *Jerusalem or any other Churches*, and about *what questio*
they pleased, and no others.

3. That it should be at the choice of *the Church whose the businesse*
is to us most incongruous; partly because it crosseth another princip
of our *Brethrens*, That *neighbour Churches offended may* (without the
reference) *call them to an account*; and partly because it seemes contra
to all principles either of Nature or Scripture, that it should be *in t*
power of the Offending party, either to choose whether he will be accomma
or no, or who alone shall be his Judges.

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Besides that 4. our *Brethren* do not shew, *in this Church* that needs ...ng, *who those are that shall choose* the Synod; whether *both sides must u*...*se* in choice of the Arbritrators, or whether *one party must chuse some and the other party choose others*, (neither of which they can sh...w in the ...stance;) or, in case a Church be divided, *whether party* shall choose, ...*ose in the right*, or *those that err*; if those who be in the right, yet still ...e question will be, *who those are*, for both parties pretend to it; or if ...e *Major part of the whole*, then if either *all* or the *greater part*, be in an ...*rour*, there will either be *no choise of a Synod at all*, or else *onely of such as will side with them* in their errour, and *confirme* them in it. Yea, and by ...is meanes, that Remedy which our *Brethren* say is *an Ordinance of God*, ...*r the removall of Offences, Scandals, Errours*, will have no place at all ...here those prevaile, for an Erroneous Church will never make choise ...(if it be in their owne sole power) of such a Synod as they know will ...condemne them.

And whereas our *Brethren* make it a matter *of Reference*, by way of ...bitration.

If their meaning be that this *Reference* doth give the Judges *power and ...uthority to determine and conclude them, as Elders*, who now have autho...rity from Christ (upon this call) to *exercise the power of Elders to them*; ...ere indeed they say something; But should they say thus, then would ...ey fall under all the *Incongruities* and *Inconveniencies* of their first Ar...gument in their former Paper; Then must *these Elders stand related to ...m at Their Church*, for *Church and Elders are Relata*, Then must ...*ey be chosen by them, Ordained by them, Maintained by them*; Then ...ust they *Preach to them* as well as *Rule them*; Then must they *visit their ...k*, &c. as our *Brethren there argue*.

If their meaning be but this, That those to whom it is referred, may ...*declare their Judgements upon the case, hold out Light to them, exhort ...m to follow their Advice*, but have no farther authority: *All this they ...ight have done Before, or Without* any such Reference made to them; ...en the *neighbour Churches in the Province or Nation* (whom our *Bre...hren* would not to have to take upon them the *power of a Synod*) may, ...thout being called, doe thus much; and such a Synod as this would ...e but a *Colledge of Advisers*, and comes far short of the Synod *Acts* 15. ...ho not onely *disputed*, and *declared* the false Teachers to be Perverters ...d Subverters, but MADE DECREES and LAID BURDENS up...on the Churches necessary to be submitted; And that not onely on the *Church of Antioch*, who alone (say our *Brethren*) Referred the question ...them, but on *All the Churches in Syria and Cilicia*, of *Whose Reference*

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we read nothing: And our *Brethren* cannot well imagine *such a Reference*, unlesse they grant either a *Synod at Antioch*, before the sending to *Jerusalem*, or a Synod at *Jerusalem* of *more then two Churches*.

But if our *Brethren* say that these *Referrers* have an *Authoritative power* (though not to *excommunicate*, yet) to *Declare, Command, Protest, non-Communicate*, &c. yet not *as Elders*, but onely *by vertue of this Reference*, which power before they had not; Then how can our *Brethren* deny all *Representation or Delegation of spirituall power?* for what is this but a *Delegating of some what of that power to these Arbitrators*, which *were before Intirely in themselves*; and that *to those who* (as to Them) *are no Church Officers*; yea not onely a giving to *a Multitude of Churches joyned to have authority over One of themselves singly*, but putting an authority at their owne pleasure *into the hands of one single Congregation, over another single Congregation*; for a *Reference* may as well be made to *one* as to *many* Churches: And if they may thus delegate *one part* of their own power to these Arbitrators, why not *another part*? why not a *power of excommunicating*, as well as of *declaring to be subverters of the Faith*.

And if they may thus delegate, either all, or part of, their Church power, What is this but a *forraine and extrinsick power to that Church*, which they so often speake against, with lesse reason, when in Classes and Synods, the particular Church concerned is a *part of those* that Judge, whereas in their way the power is put quite out of their owne hands, to the Arbitrators. And if they may not be *confined herein to the Churches of a Province or Nation*, but must make Reference at pleasure to any *Churches in the World whatsoever*, as they list; & thereby invest those Churches, if not with *compleat Church power*, yet at least with a power to *judge authoritatively in Doctrines of Faith*, to *declare* and *pronounce the Churches of this Kingdome to be Hereticks, subverters of the Faith, perverters of Soules*, and (perhaps) *to make and impose decrees and lay burdens*: and in all these things to be looked at and acknowledged as *an Ordinance of Christ*. What is this but an introducing a *forraine Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction*, which in their second Argument they would charge upon us?

If our *Brethren* say (as sometimes they do) that in this power of *making decrees, laying burdens*, &c. especially as to the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and as to those points not referred, the Apostles acted by an Apostolick authority, and not as Elders in a Synod:

Then 1. (to say nothing at present of the *Elders joyning with them* in these Decrees, even to those Churches, *Acts* 15. 23. and 16. 4) we aske, How can our *Brethren* make this Reference to Apostles, and Decision by Apostles, as *Apostles*, to be a warrant for *elective Synods of those*

who have not *Apostolick power*? Or how shall we know what they did as *Apostles*, and what as a *Synod* for our imitation?

1. How can our *Brethren* say, that this sending to Apostles, *as Apostles*, was ELECTIVE? for it was not *Elective* to the Churches of *Antioch*, whether or no to make the *last reference* for decision in Controversies *to the Apostles then living*; but they were *obliged* then to stand to their *decisions* as much as we now to their *writings*.

3. How can our *Brethren* say, that it was a Reference *in This case Onely, without any obligation to refer other matters at other times to their decision*? For certainly they were obliged, in All matters to stand to their decision *as Apostles*, as much as in this One.

4. We might adde, that if the Apostles here acted *as Apostles*, then (having authority as *Elders in all Churches*) they might not only *Declare*, and *Censure*, but even *Excommunicate* and *exercise All Church power*; And then, if what was here done, or might be done, be a *precedent for Synods now*, the authority of Synods will be more then what our *Brethren* allow them.

5. Nor had they then *an authority*, by vertue of this Reference, *which before they had not*; but onely *exercised that authority which before they had*.

And whereas our *Brethren* adde, *That though this of* Acts 15. *were not a formall Synod, yet it holds out by a rule of equity, that offences among Churches should be referred by themselves to others who are best able to heale them; and so may be a pattern of Elective Synods*: (they should have added, And that they may by other Churches be called to give account, in case of offence; for such Synods also they acknowledge.)

Answ. 1. Our *Brethren* here *resolve all into Rules of Equity*: and certainly the rules of equity will as strongly plead for *Subordination upon Association*, as for an *Arbitrary Reference*, for the offending party to choose whether he shall be tried or no, and by what Judges.

2. If this onely be their warrant for *Elective Synods*, then we leave them to answer their owne first argument; That *such Courts as have not the Greatest and most Expresse warrant and assignment for them in the Word, both for their Subordination and Number, and for their Bounds and limits of Power, are not to be erected in the Church of God.*

Our *Brethren* conclude, That *they have shewed sufficiently, the difference between the meeting at Jerusalem, and such Synods as we contend for; and say, that upon supposition that one Kingdom were governed by way of Elective Arbitration, another by way of Subordinate Courts, these are such differing formes, that he who would make the first conforme to the last, should overthrow the fundamentall laws of it.*

Anſ. Beſides that, all this is ſufficiently anſwered already; and, That th
place was not by us alleadged to prove either the Subordination o
Power of Synods, but onely the Being of Synods, (which our *Brethre*
grant to be ſufficiently proved from it:) We only adde, That ſince th
Government of Chriſts Church, is firſt by *brotherly Admonition*, and i
this prevaile not, then to cure them by *Church cenſure*, and neither i
the One nor the Other the party Offending to *chooſe his owne Judges*
They who would bring it to an *Arbitrary Electiveneſſe*, ſo as the partie
Offending may *chooſe, who ſhall heare their cauſe*, and *ſubmit no further the*
themſelves like, Do change the Laws of Chriſts Kingdome.

The Answer to our *Brethrens* Reasons *againſt the Argument drawne from the Analogy of* Mat. 18.

THe *ſtrength of that Argument* (ſay our Brethren) *runnes, That be*
cauſe there Should be this remedy, therefore there Is ſuch a Remedy.

Anſ. Why our *Brethren* ſhould take this to be the ſtrength of our Ar
gument, we cannot tell: Our argument lies plainly thus: *Mat.* 18
proving the Subordination of a particular perſon offending, to a particula
Church, doth by a like reaſon prove the Subordination of an offending Congre
gation to greater Aſſemblies: And the reaſon of it is, Becauſe *th*
Grounds, Reaſons, and Ends of Subordination are the ſame in both, That God
may be glorified, The Offender ſhamed, humbled, reduced, and ſin not
ſuffered to reſt upon him, That others may be preſerved from conta
gion and made to feare, That ſcandall and pollution of the Ordinance
may be prevented or removed, &c. All which argue as ſtrongly and ful
ly for the *Subordination of an Offending Congregation to ſuperior and grea*
ter Aſſemblies, as of an *Offending Brother to a particular Congregation*
for (as our *Brethren* often intimate) there is the ſame relation *between*
Church and Church, as there is *between Brother and Brother.*

If our *Brethren* were asked, what courſe were to be taken with a
Siſter offending? we doubt not but they would ſay, the ſame that
Chriſt here propoſeth in caſe of an offending *Brother*; and they would
give this reaſon, *Becauſe there is the like reaſon of both*, and therefore
Chriſt ſuppoſed to intend both: And if they will then ſay, *The ſtrength of*
this reaſon (concerning an offending Siſter) *is this, Becauſe there ſhould*
be this remedy, therefore there is ſuch a Remedy, we hope they will then al
low that Argument to be a good one. And we, not doubting but that
it was *Chriſts meaning* to *prevent and remove ſcandalls* as well of an *offen-*
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ing Siſter, as of an offending *Brother*, and of an *Offending Church*, or ſome Number of offenders, as well as of a *particular perſon*; and that in caſe of *publike ſcandals*, as well as of *private offences*; doubt not but it was his meaning while he gives *Inſtance in One*, that the *like courſe* (*mutatis mutandis*) ſhould in a due proportion *be uſed in all the reſt*.

Nor is this our Argument alone, but (as others, ſo) Mr. *Cotton* of *New-England* makes uſe of it in his *Keyes*, Chap. 6. (a Treatiſe publiſhed by two of theſe *Brethren*) Where, having ſpoken of one Cauſe of Synods, that is, *when a Church deſireth the helpe and councell of other Churches*, as *Acts* 15. he addeth another diſtinct ground of Synods (*which*, ſaith he, *juſt conſequence from Scripture giveth us*) that is, the caſe of any *Church* lying under Scandall, *Look then as one Brother being offended with another, and not able to heale him by the mouth of two or three* Brethren *privately, it behooveth him to carry it to the whole Church; ſo by proportion if one Church ſee matter of Offence in another, and be not able to heale it in a more private way, it will behoove them to procure the Aſſembly of many Churches, that the Offence may be orderly heard, and judged and removed.* And more fully in another Treatiſe of his, *The ſame conſtitution of a particular viſible Church.* p. 12. 13. Where he cleerely diſtinguiſheth this caſe, (in which he recommends a remedy by proportion from *Mat.* 18) from that caſe of *Acts* 15.

But ſay our Brethren, *There is a remedy for Congregations, which is a going forth to other Churches, held out in* Acts 15. *A remedy of Coordination, ſuch as between Nations, between* Pares, *not of Subordination. And were it ſo, how ineffectuall would it be for a Generall Councell or Nationall Aſſembly, to excommunicate a Nation or Province?*

Anſ. 1. This doth not take away the ſtrength of our Argument; it ſhewes not, that *There is not the like reaſon of both*, or if there be, that *the ſame Courſe* (ſo far as can be) *is not proportionably to be uſed in both.*

2. As to that point of *Ineffectualneſſe*; we doubt not but our *Brethren* thinke that there is an *Efficacy* in *Subordinations of Churches* as well as *perſons*, though there ſhould be no proceeding to *Excommunication of a Province or Nation*; And though they would ſeeme to plead, that *ſuch a Subordination would be Ineffectuall* and to no purpoſe: We believe, their feare is, *it would be too Effectuall.*

3. The *Parity* of Church and Church doth no more hinder the *Subordination of One Church to a Combination of Many*, then the Parity of *Brother and Brother* will hinder the Subordination of *one* to a Congregation of *many*. And ſo it was with the Parity of *Tribe and Tribe.*

4. The *Remedy themſelves propoſe*, as held forth *Acts.* 15. muſt have the ſame foundation with this Argument of ours; For 1. they do not

say, That *there was at Jerusalem an Elective Synod*, but a *Reference* which (By A Like Reason) *will* Give Warrant *to an Elective Synod*; For if *one* Church may go forth for help, then by the same reason *many* may so do; & if they may go forth to *one* Church for help they may by the same reason goe forth *to many*, and thus by *Equality of reason* they gather warrant for an *Elective Synod*. 2. Nay more, our *Brethren* say here, *That all Churches* (not only those to whom a reference is made) *have a power to declare the Offence, and withdraw Communion from those Churches*: Which power they have not *by vertue of the Reference* (for possibly there was none such made, at least not to *all Churches*) but *in themselves, without such reference*; and whence can our *Brethren* prove this, but by a *Like Reason*, either from *Acts* 15. or *Mat.* 18. for it is not *Expresse* in either. 3. Againe, the Declaration *Acts* 15. was not against the Church *of Antioch*, but against *some persons in it* that were guilty of those crimes: yet hence our *Brethren* infer a *Declaration against an Offending* Church: which must be on this ground, That the Meeting at *Jerusalem* might by the same reason declare against the *Church of Antioch*, if the *Church* offended, as they did against *some persons* in it, upon *their* offence.

5. Whereas our *Brethren* thinke there is no use of *Subordination of Churches*, unless for the *Excommunicating of whole Churches* (a thing not known in the Presbyterian government) their owne Instance alledged from *Acts* 15. shewes the contrary. For though the *Decrees* were directed and injoyned to *Churches*, yet not the *Churches*, but *particular persons in the Churches*, are *censured as subverters of the Faith*, &c. And thus may a *Classis* or *Synod*, Excommunicate *one or more persons* in a Church, Province, a Nation, without excommunicating of *whole Churches*; when as in our *Brethrens* way, their *Elective Synods*, do Non-Communicate Whole *Societies* for the offence of one or a few persons not redressed.

6. *How ineffectuall would that be*, if, according to this notion of Elective Synods, as our *Brethren* would have it, there were *no other course* to reclaime or deale with an *Erroneous offending Church*, but onely upon *their own reference* to such persons or Churches as *themselves would choose* and onely *so far as themselves please*? If there had been no course taken with those *subverters* at *Antioch*, till themselves had made a reference to *Jerusalem*; those *Churches* might much sooner have been infected *with their leaven*, then *they* perswaded to *make such a reference*. Our Brethren *sometimes* speake of Churches offended, requiring an account of Churches offending; but we find them *here* very sparing of insisting thereupon, or shewing *upon what grounds* they build that practice. For the place of *Acts* 15. as they interpret it, of a *voluntary Reference*

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by way of Arbitration to other Churches, is ſomewhat different from that *of thoſe other Churches calling them to an account without ſuch a reference*; nor will this be ſuch an *Elective Synod*. And that Argument which would ſerve moſt fairely for warrant of that practiſe, (*viz.* by analogy from *Mat.* 18. preſſed by Mr. *Cotton* and others) they cannot make uſe of, without granting *our* Argument. For if the Argument, *from Analogy*, be good but ſo far as *they pleaſe to urge it*; it ſufficeth to *our purpoſe in this propoſition*, which aſſerts onely *a Subordination*; but, *what power the Superior Aſſembly ſhall have over the Subordinate*, this propoſition aſſerts not: yea, though the propoſition had aſſerted that which our *Brethren* here ſuppoſe, *the power of Excommunication in ſuperior Aſſemblies*, the Argument from Analogy would as well hold in *that* branch of proceeding as in *all the reſt*.

7. And our *Brethrens* exception, of the *Ineffectualneſſe* which they urge: [*If they cannot uſe this remedy* (of excommunicating a whole Nation) *to what end is this ſubordination of Synods pleaded for?*] Is of no weight; for there may be occaſion of *Subordination*, yea of exerciſing the power of *Excommunication* in *Synods*, & that to good purpoſe, againſt *particular Perſons* in a Province, or Nation, or particular Congregation, without excommunicating *that whole* Province, Nation, or Congregation; as the Meeting at *Jeruſalem* cenſured the *falſe Teachers* at *Antioch* without cenſuring the *Church* of *Antioch*. 2. Or, if only the *Ineffectualneſſe*, might be a reaſon why a Synod *ſhould not proceed* to Excommunicate a Province or Congregation; yet this doth not prove *they have no authority* to do it, but only, that there may be ſome cauſe to *ſtop the Exerciſe of that power or Authority*. As when a Prince or State makes a Law againſt *Rebels* or *Traytors* to puniſh them with *Death*; In caſe an *Army* of ſuch Rebels or Traytors, or a *whole Province* rebels; this Multitude doth not excuſe *any one perſon* of them from being *obnoxious* to that Law or the Penalty of it, yet it may be a reaſon why ſuch a Prince or State ſhould not (*in prudence*) *execute that Rigor* of the Law upon *every perſon* of them, but only upon ſome *principall Offenders*; yet is that *whole Province*, or *Army* of Rebels, *ſubordinate* to that Prince or State, and the Laws thereof.

Our *Brethren* likewiſe may remember, that many other things in the Aſſembly were given in Anſwer; as That *this gives to a Synod of many Churches no more power over a Particular Church (yea a particular perſon) then one Brother hath over another Brother, yea over a whole Church*; (For our *Brethren* will not deny, but that he may admoniſh, declare, and withdraw Communion:) That *Independent Churches eſteeme* Non-Communion *with other Churches their owne Happineſſe; and therefore to be Non-Communicated would be to them No Puniſhment at all; or at leaſt,*

no other then what Themselves inflict on All the Churches of the World besides: And, *That it is not suitable to the Wisdome of Jesus Christ to apply the Strongest Remedy, for the Weakest and least dangerous Disease,* viz. the case of an offending Brother; *and the Weakest Remedy to the most dangerous Disease,* viz. the case of an offending Church.

Of this last onely, our *Brethren* take notice; and give no other Answer to it, but onely by way of Retortion: *That in a Nationall Assembly, not onely there wants this Strongest Remedy, but they have the greatest Power to doe Hurt; and if they Erre, their Errour is greater then of a Bishop or Pope, who being but one, may be deposed; and the greater part of the Clergie being still the worse and more corrupt; and yet by the Presbyterian Principles must all be taken in, a Nationall Assembly chosen by them, are like to be, for the greatest part of them, the more Corrupt.*

To which retortion, (omitting their so frequent using of the word *Clergy*, which, for what reasons they doe it, themselves best know; and their so frequent comparing the Government of the Reformed Churches to, and making it worse then, that of *Popes* and *Bishops*) we Answer,

1. If a *Nationall Assembly* doe altogether *want* this remedy of *Subordination*, then should not our *Brethren* have charged us in their second Argument, with *bringing in a forraign Ecclesiasticall Power over each State and Kingdome*: and we know no reason for their so doing, unlesse thereby (as much as they can) to render this Government odious.

2. We say more of the *Subordination of Generall Assemblies*, then they of *Particular Congregations*; we say, not onely that they may *Erre*, be subject to the *advise* of a Synod, be *Separated* from, *Non-communicated*, &c. we say, they are not more *Independent* then we think *lesser Assemblies* to be; For, if Providence leave a *particular Church*, without the help of neighbour Churches, they must needs want the benefit of Associations and Subordinations, (and so must a *particular Person*, if he cannot enjoy the opportunity of *joyning with any particular Congregation*) but this is not their *priviledge*, but their *losse*: the like we say, when a *Nationall Assembly* cannot enjoy, *absque gravissimis incommodis*, the help of an *Universall Synod*, or an *Synod of severall Nations*.

3. All the Remedies that our *Brethren* hold out for particular Churches offending, leave then yet *more Independent* then *Bishops* or *Popes*; for these may be not onely *admonished, prayed for, separated from, Non-communicated*, but (as our *Brethren* acknowledge) *deposed*; but their *particular Congregations* offending, are not *subject to any such authoritative Censure*, nor any *persons in them*, from any but their own Congrega-

tion.

tion. When *Bellarmine* and others, in the caſe of an Hereticall Pope, ſay, that *though a Councell may not Depoſe him, yet they may Pray for him, and Admoniſh him; and that* (ſaith *Bellarmine*) *is ſufficient; and though Chriſt have given no other humane efficacious Remedies for the evill that may ariſe by ſuch a Pope, We muſt reſt content, the Churches condition is ſafe, becauſe it depends upon God, and not upon men:* To this Doctor *Ames* replies (and may it not be applyed to our Brethren?) *Eccleſia igitur non eſt reſpublica perfecta ſibi ſufficiens in ordine ad ſuum finem*; nor hath Chriſt provided means for all the Churches neceſſities. *Bellar.* de Concil. l. 2. Cap. 19. *Bel.* Enerv. Tom. 2. l. 1. Cap. 7. *Whitak.* de Conc. qu. 5. cap. 3.

4. For healing the Offence or Errour of a *Nationall Church*, the ſtrongeſt and moſt efficacious Remedy *that can be had*, may be made uſe of; if that of a further *Subordination* cannot be had, the reaſon then, that it wants this Remedy, is not Becauſe, though it could be had, *it might not be uſed*; but, Becauſe, though it might be uſed, yet *it cannot be had*: But this will not be a reaſon why a *partieular Congregation* ſhould not make uſe of ſuch remedies as *may be had:* No more then, Becauſe if a *Parliament* Erre, there is no *higher Court to Appeal to*; therefore there may not by an Appeale *from inferiour Courts to it.*

5. To what they adde, that the *greater part of the Clergie are the more Corrupt, and yet muſt all be taken in*; We ſay, 1. Though ſuch *corrupt Miniſters*, as our *Brethren* ſuppoſe, and *thoſe Congregations* that have ſuch Miniſters, and (as our *Brethren* ſuppoſe) *can have no better*, becauſe *there are no others to be had in their roome*, have as *much need as others to be under a Government*, and not *therefore to doe what they liſt without controle, becauſe they are Corrupt*; (for we doe not think our *Brethren* will own this Principle, That becauſe the greater part of *Men* are the more Corrupt, therefore there may be *no* Government, but every one be allowed to doe what is good in his own eyes;) yet that ſuch *corrupt Miniſters* muſt needs be *taken into Synods*, we ſee no reaſon, nor doth our Propoſition aſſert. it 2. And as to their Electing of a National Aſſembly; though we doubt not but ſuch *corrupt Miniſters* as our *Brethren* ſuppoſe, who deſerve to be *depoſed from being Miniſters*, may well be *denyed their Vote in Election*; yet, if their ſuppoſition were granted, they have no better reaſon to conclude, That the greater part of a *Nationall Aſſembly* muſt be corrupt, becauſe choſen by the *generality of Miniſters*; then, That the greater part of a *Parliament* muſt needs be corrupt, becauſe choſen by the *generality of Men*, of whom the greater part may as well be ſuppoſed to be the worſe, as the greater part of Miniſters. And indeed this Argument doth not ſo much oppoſe *Subordination of Synods*, as it ſtrikes at the root of *All Government*, both *Eccleſiaſticall* and *Civill*.

But

But say our Brethren, *the preserving the rights and liberties of a State and seeking the common good of it, is naturall to the generality of men; but the Truthes of the Gospell, and the Purity of Religion, and the Power thereof, are contrary to the Principles of all naturall men, and hath ever been opposed by the most part of the Clergie.*

Ans. 1. This at most would prove only, That *corrupt men* may *more safely be trusted* with *civill Liberties*; it doth not prove, but That according to their Argument, the *Parliament* are like to be the *more corrupt* as well as the *Generall Assembly.*

And 2. Though they might thereupon be trusted with *civil Liberties* yet (according to these principles) they must not meddle with *Religion* at all, more then the *Nationall Synod.*

3. Though the *generality of corrupt men* may be forward enough to preserve *the Liberties of a State*; (yea, and liberty of Conscience too) yet they are not forward to have *sinne punished*; yet That is *one main work* of *bodies Politick.*

4. If *the Truth of the Gospell, and the purity and power of Religion, be contrary to the principles of all naturall men*, yea, and much more, then the *Rights and Liberties of a State*: then is there lesse reason that every Person, or Combination of persons should be permitted under pretence of Conscience, to Beleeve and Practice what they please, in matters of *Religion*; then, that they should so be permitted in matters of *State.* For if the generality of men be in matters of Religion the *more corrupt* (and the more apt to corrupt others) they have *the more need of Government.*

5. But why our *Brethren* should thus seek occasion to cast odious aspersions upon the ministery in generall, as here they do, (That *in greater bodyes of the Clergy, the greater part are, and have been still the worse and more corrupt*; That *Ministers, if not converted, are of all others, the worst and greatest opposers to Religion*; That *in a Nationall Assembly, the greatest number are like to be of the worst*; That *in all Ages, the most of the Clergy have been aptest to corrupt the Truth, and to oppose the purity and power of Religion*) we cannot tell, unlesse it be their designe to Blast and Vilifie (as much as they can) not only the Authority and Power of *Synods*, but the Office and Work of the *Ministery* or Clergy, (as they love to call them;) especially when they know that *Synods* in Reformed Churches consist of *Others beside Ministers*; and that perhaps in as large or larger proportion.

6. But if it be true which they say, that *the generality of Ministers are the apt to corrupt the Truth, & oppose Religion in the power and purity of it*; then of how *dangerous a consequence* would that be, if *every* such *Minister* must

be permitted to *seduce and gather to himself* a company of people at his owne pleasure, who should *thenceforth plead Exemption and Independency* in reference to any Authoritative Ecclesiasticall Judicatory whatever? especially when we may far more truely say, of those that, to obtaine Liberty, would pretend Tenderneſſe of Conſcience and Exemption from Eccleſiaſticall Judicatures, what our *Brethren* here ſay of Miniſters, *viz.* That of thoſe *the greater part are and have been ſtill the Worſe and more corrupt, as is apparent in this Kingdome at preſent.*

7. This reaſon of our *Brethren* doth no way take off the ſtrength of that Objection; For we ſay further, that both Parliaments, Synods, and particular Churches have many times dangerouſly erred; which proves, That great care ſhould be had of thoſe who are to be elected and admitted into ſuch Aſſemblies, that no juſt exception may be made againſt them, but not, That ſuch Aſſemblies ſhould not therefore be. Nor doth this anſwer of our *Brethren* at all take off the ſtrength of our Argument *a pari ratione*, that by their Argument, there muſt either be puniſhments for Parliaments, or none for inferiour Courts.

Our *Brethren* adde; *that after the firſt 300 years when Synods began to be moſt in credit, the myſtery of Iniquity grew up with them.*

Anſw. 1. So have many Schiſmes and other errors, with Independent Congregations. 2. So do Tares and Wheat. 3. The truth is, the myſterie of Iniquity increaſed, as well conſtituted Synods did decreaſe; for as the Pope was exalted, ſo were Synods diſgraced and diſuſed. much like as it was with us, between Prerogative and Parliaments.

And for what they fear, That by this meanes *New truths would not be taught, but ſuppreſſed, till a whole Nation is inlightened in it*; We anſwer, That Synods ought to ſurpreſſe *new Errors*, and *old ones revived*, though they come in the name of *new Truthes*; if they do otherwiſe, its the fault of the Men, not the Government, and we muſt not deny all power of *ſuppreſſing Errors*, for fear leſt poſſibly ſome men may abuſe that power to the *prejudice of Truth*; no more then we may take away all of *puniſhing Malefactors*, for feare that ſome ſhould abuſe that power to the prejudice of the *Innocent*. It is certaine true, That the Higheſt Courts, if corrupted, may doe the moſt miſchiefe; but it follows not, That therefore ſuch Courts (though uncorrupted) ſhould not be.

Their ſecond anſwer to our Argument *a pari ratione* from *Mat.* 18. is this, *The effieacy of all remedies depends*, 1. *on Chriſts Bleſſing, which depends upon his Inſtitution*; *but* Par ratio *will never ſet up an Ordinance of Chriſt.* 2. *The Sutableneſſe of the condition of thoſe that are to be dealt with; now its more Sutable for Churches to be dealt with in a Brotherly*

way of Admonition and Withdrawing Communion; as if a Province, or a Multitude rebell, a State will not hang up all, though to particular Persons this were an efficacious remedy. 3. *Christ hath suted his remedies to all times, and all conditions.*

Ans. 1. If *Par ratio* will not *set up* an Ordinance of Christ, yet it may serve to *prove* an Ordinance of Christ, or at least to *warrant a practise*, which is enough to our purpose. If not, How will our *Brethren* prove *Baptizing of Infants*, or *Womens receiving of the Lords Supper*, to be Institutions of Christ? How will they prove from *Mat.* 18. an Institution of Christ to proceed in case of a *publike scandall* as well as of a private Offence; or to proceed against a *Sister offending* in the same manner, as with and offending Brother? How will they prove, that it is an Ordinance of Christ that our Synods must be *Now, Elective*, as they suppose it was in the case of *Antioch*? or How will they prove that *Synods are* at all, *an Ordinance of Christ*, if (as they say) the meeting at *Jerusalem* were not a *formall Synod*? How will they prove their *Non-Communion of Churches*, from the example of *Pauls* departing from *Barnabas* Act. 15. 39. which they alleadge for it, upon this ground, *That look what power one Apostle had in reference to another Apostle, the same hath one Church to another Church*? In all which (beside many more Instances that might be alleged) our *Brethren* will be very far to seeke, unlesse they will admit a *par ratio* to prove an Institution.

2. This way of proceeding with Churches is a very *Suitable remedy*; and our *Brethrens* Instance will help to make it out; For as if a *Province* rebell, the *Ring-leaders* of that Rebellion may be hang'd up, without hanging up all in that Province, and the rest reduced by other means (though yet the *whole Province* be *subordinate* to that Prince or State.) So may a Synod Provinciall or Nationall excommunicate the *chief Offenders* in an Erring Church without excommunicating that *whole Church*, and reclaime the rest by other meanes, and yet that *whole Church* be *Subordinate* to that Synod. But if they may onely *Admonish* an offending Church, and, if that prevaile not, *withdraw communion* from them; it is much as if that Prince or State, who may *hang a single Rebell*, but in case a *Province* or *Multitude* rebell, he may onely send them an *Admonition* to lay downe their Armes, and if that prevaile not, *Declare them Rebels* and then *let them take their owne course.*

3. To that *of Christs suting his remedies to all times and conditions*; We have answered before, (for indeed many of our *Brethrens* Arguments are more then once produced:) Synods and Associations are *at all times* a Remedy to be made use of, so far as may *be obtained*, and as may most tend to the *effecting of those ends* for which they are appointed

appointed: But, that Gods providence is *ſo* futable to his Inſtitutions, that what ever may, by his appointment, be *made uſe of at any time*, can be *injoyed at all times*, and in *all conditions*, our *Brethren* will never prove. *Ruling Elders, Deacons, Elderſhips* are by our *Br:* acknowledged & profeſſed to be Inſtitutions of Chriſt, yet they will not ſay that *all* their Congregations (perhaps not any of them) have been ſo happy as *at all times* and *in all Conditions* to have them all. *Impoſition of hands on Church officers by an Elderſhip*, our *Brethren* acknowledge to be an Inſtitution of Chriſt, yet we beleeve that *ſome* of their Congregations have not *at all times* and in *all conditions* been in a capacity of ſuch *impoſition of hands*, or have had *an Elderſhip* to do it. To ſay nothing of *Excommunication* and *Church cenſures*, which we thinke that *all* their Churches have not been at times and in all conditions in a *capacity to exerciſe* according to their owne principles.

Their laſt anſwer is this; *If the Analogy of* Mat. 18. *be argued from, Then.* 1. *Let the Analogy be kept, For as a Brother is not at firſt to be brought to a ſtanding Court, but admoniſhed firſt by One, then by Two or Three: So by this proportion inſtead of theſe Set and Standing Aſſemblies there ſhould onely be two or three or more neighbour Churches to admoniſh the Offending Church, not a ſtanding Court*

Anſ. 1. If not *at firſt* brought to a ſtanding Court, yet there muſt be a *ſtanding* Court by this proportion to which it may *at length* be brought.

2. Though in *private offences* between man and man, there muſt be firſt *private* Admonition, to *prevent* (if it may be) *the making of it publike*; yet our *Brethren* (we thinke) will not ſay, that in an *Open ſcandall*, which is publike already, *the Church may not take notice of it* till ſome *private Brethren* have thus proceeded. We read of no ſuch *private* Admonition injoyned by *Paul* in the caſe of the *Inceſtuous Corinthian*; Nor 1 *Tim.* 5. 12. *in rebuking thoſe that ſinne openly.* But caſes brought to a *Synod*, are ſuppoſed to be *known before*; if not, we grant that the ſame obligation of *private admonition* lieth upon thoſe who ſhall *complaine to a Synod* (either of a Church or of a Perſon) as on thoſe that *complaine to a particular Church.*

To what they next adde their (Argument ſo often repeated) *And* 2. *where is a Synod called The Church.* We Anſwer, That when our *Brethren* have ſhewed us *firſt*, where *the Elders and Brethren* of a particular Congregation, without *the women and Children* are ſo called, and *ſecondly* that a Synod is not ſo called in *Mat.* 18. we ſhall then beſides thoſe Anſwers formerly given (which yet are abundantly ſufficient) give them more.

The Church Universall (they grant) *is called a Church and One body to Christ*; but say they, *as Materially considered and not as a Politick body in respect to government, which was never yet asserted by this Assembly.*

Answ. Whether the Assembly have yet asserted this or no, is not materiall; there are many Truthes in Divinity, which *this Assembly hath never* YET *asserted*: But, That *this Church Universall* is an *Organicall Body*, in which the members are not all *one member but many*, and those many members have *severall distinct functions*: That *the Officers, Ordinances, &c. are set in this Church, and given to this Church Universall*, and are to exercise their severall offices as *in relation to the whole*, and for the *good of the whole*; and, That every Particular Visible Church (which our *Brethren* will not deny to be a *politicall body for government*) is but a *part or member* of this *Church generall*, (and much more to this purpose;) we thinke our *Brethren* will not say, That this Assembly hath never yet asserted: But whether they will thinke that this is *tantamount* as to say, *the Church generall is a Politick Body*, we do not much passe; for we like not to contend with our *Brethren* for words.

To what they last object, *Then 3. by this Argument from Analogie, a more power must be placed in the greater Assembly then in the particular Congregation.* We answer; *What power* the superior Assembly hath over the subordinate, is not the question in this Proposition. If there be a *Subordination of the Assemblies* one to the other, it is as much as this Proposition contends for. And let our *Brethren* grant the like power to *Synods* over *offending Congregations*, as we grant a *Congregation* to have over an *offending Brother*, and the controversie will soone end.

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

The

REASONS
OF THE
DISSENTING BRETHREN
CONCERNING
THE POWER
THAT IS IN
CONGREGATIONS,
Having in them a Sufficient Presbytery
FOR
ORDINATION.

LONDON,
Printed for *Humphrey Harward.* 1648.

Againſt the PROPOSITION touching *Ordination*: viz.

It is very requiſite, That no ſingle Congregation that can conveniently aſſociate, doe aſſume to it ſelfe all and ſole power in Ordination:

We offer theſe *Reaſons*.

I. *WHere there is a ſufficient Preſbytery, all and ſole power in Ordination may be aſſumed, though Aſſociation may be had. But there may be a ſufficient Preſbytery in a particular Congregation.*

The *Major* hath *two parts*: 1. *That a ſufficient Preſbyterie may aſſume all and ſole power in Ordination.* 2. *That it may doe ſo though it may aſſociate.*

The *former part* is proved, 1 *Tim.*4.14. *By the laying on of the hands of the Preſbytery*, as is voted by the Aſſembly, which is the only Scripture brought for Ordination by ordinary Elders.

The *ſecond part*, [*That they may doe this though they may aſſociate*] appeares,

1. Becauſe Aſſociation doth neither adde to, nor diminiſh the power of a Presbytery: it is by way of *Accumulation*, not *Privation*, as is acknowledged by the Reformed Churches.
2. If *Aſſociation* be ſo neceſſarily required, where it may be had; then neither a *Claſſicall*, *Provinciall*, nor *Nationall Presbytery* can *aſſume* all and ſole power in Ordination, *if there be any other Claſſicall, Provinciall, or Nationall Presbytery*, with whom they may aſſociate: And that there is, or may be alwayes ſome, is neceſſarily to be ſuppoſd in theſe times of the Goſpell, if any Aſſociation ought to be.

The *Minor*, that *there may be a sufficient Presbytery* in a particular congregation, is proved,

1. By the second proposition touching Church Government, sent up to the Honourable Houses of Parliament, *viz. A Presbytery consists of Ministers of the Word, and such other publike Officers, as are agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God to be Church-Governours to joyne with the Ministers in the Government of the Church.* All which may be in a particular Congregation.

2. Wherein consists *the sufficiency of a Presbytery*? The *number* of how many Elders, is not set or bounded by Institution; suppose two or three: & if *more be* requisite, in a particular Congregation there may be four or five: And a *Presbytery over many Congregations*, is acknowledged to be *sufficient*, though it consist of no more: If *they* have this power *as a sufficient Presbytery*, why not the other also? *Have they their power only, as having relation to many Congregations?* Is that, the essentiall requisite to their sufficiency? Here are Elders, and as many Elders, having relation to a Church: and the Argument used by the Reverend Assembly to prove a Presbytery over many Congregations, is, *that Elders are mentioned in Relation to One Church.*

II. *That which two Apostles being joyned together, might doe in a particular Congregation, that ordinary Elders may doe in a particular Congregation: but* Paul *and* Barnabas *ordained Elders in particular Congregations, though they might associate.*

Therefore, &c.

The *Consequence* appears thus, If the Argument brought by the Reverend Assembly doe hold, *viz.* That when *the Apostles* meet together for ordination, or for ordering the affaires of the *Church of Jerusalem*, they meet *as ordinary Elders*, (which they have voted) then surely, when *Paul* and *Barnabas* met to ordaine Elders in particular Congregations; it is to be averred they met for that act as ordinary Elders.

The *Minor* hath two parts. 1. *Paul and Barnabas ordained Elders in particular Congregations.* 2. *That they might Associate.*

1. That these were particular Congregations wherein they ordained Elders, appeares,

Because it is not supposable, that the Cities, much lesse the Regions round abound, where the Apostles preached & erected Churches, (as appears by *Act.* 13.49. compared with *Act.* 14. 6. 21,22,23.) were grown to many Congregations before the Apostles appointed Elders to them: For the Apostles who were to preach in all places,

places, would not ſtay ſo long in one place; and it was their Courſe, when they were there, ἐχειροτονησαν, as at *Derbe*, *Act.* 14. 21. to ſet Elders to them.

Againe, this was the firſt ordination of Elders to thoſe places, and therefore muſt needs be to particular Congregations, for the Claſſis is made up of the Elders of many Congregations.

Laſtly, they ordained Elders, κατ' ἐκκλησιαν and αὐτοῖς; and at their ordaining, they faſted and prayed, commending them to the Grace of God; which faſting and praying, being (according to the principles of us both) to be in particular Congregations, it followeth that the Churches, to which thoſe Elders were appointed, were particular Congregations.

For the ſecond, *that they might Aſſociate, it appears,*

Becauſe there were Churches in the Regions Round about, and yet the Apoſtle mentions not Aſſociation, which they would have done, if that had been the way, for when they did things with ordinary Elders, it is thus Recorded, *The Apoſtles and Elders*: But they *Commend them to the Grace of God*, as *Paul* did the Church of *Epheſus*, *Act.* 20. 32. as leaving ſufficient meanes to perpetuate ſucceſſion, and to ordaine other Elders, if any ſhould die, as alſo *to build them up to eternall life.*

Sic ſubſcribitur: *Tho. Goodwin*, *Philip Nye*, *Jer. Burroughes*, *Sidrach Sympſon.* *William Bridge*, *William Greenhill*, *William Carter.*

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

The ANSWER to the REASONS of the Diſſenting Brethren *Againſt the Propoſition touching Ordination*, viz.

It is very requiſite that no ſingle Congregation, that can conveniently aſſociate, do aſſume to its ſelf all and ſole power in Ordination.

AMong all the Propoſitions which the Aſſembly preſented to the Honourable Houſes of Parliament, concerning *Ordination*, our *Brethren* have ſingled out this one, to which they enter their *Diſſent*; as if this alone were oppoſite to their opinions touching this matter: Which, whether it be ſo, or, that there was not ſome other reaſon of their inſiſting on this, rather then on any of the reſt, themſelves beſt know. We remember that in a Propoſition not altogether unlike to this, ſome others of the Aſſembly differed ſomewhat in the debate, from the *Major* part. And we have obſerved our *Brethren* ready enough to take notice and make uſe of any ſuch difference (although ſometimes but in point of method; as, whether, of two propoſitions, This, or That ſhould be firſt debated) and to talke of a *third party* in the Aſſembly. We obſerve likewiſe that the Arguments here brought againſt this Propoſition are not properly Arguments of their owne, nor preſſed by themſelves in the Aſſembly, nor ſuch as are moſt ſutable to their owne opinions; but, Arguments uſed by others, in that debate. And whether that difference were not ſome reaſon, why our *Brethren* choſe rather to inſiſt upon this Propoſition in their Diſſent, then on ſome other, themſelves are beſt able to determine. We expected from our *Brethren* (in a ſearch for Truth, not a conteſt for Victory) Arguments to proove, That *every ſingle Congregation* (whether there be in it a ſufficient, or inſufficient Presbytery, or none at all) *have the whole power of Ordination within themſelves*; and that, none but themſelves may Ordaine for them: (For, we ſuppoſe our *Brethren*, or at leaſt ſome of them,

them, are of this opinion:) but this, they are pleased to decline.

We must observe also of these borrowed Arguments brought by our *Brethren* against this Proposition, that neither of them concludes against the Proposition in debate. The first can conclude onely this, That *there* MAY BE *such a Presbytery, as may assume all and sole power*; not that there *is*; nor (if they were) That, it is *requisite* they should so do. The other concludes onely thus much, That ORDINARY ELDERS *may Ordaine* IN *a particular Congregation*, (which we never denyed:) not, That the Elders *of one single Congregation* may Ordaine; nor, That they may *assume all and sole power in Ordination*; nor, That it is *requisite* they should so do. But, such as they are, we shall take them into Consideration in order.

The Answer *to their first* Argument.

Their first Argument is thus framed. "*Where there is a sufficient Pres-*"*bytery, all and sole power in Ordination may be assumed, though Associ-*"*tion may be had. But there may be a sufficient Presbytery in a particular*"*Congregation.* What their conclusion would be we cannot tell, but we thinke they would conclude, *Therefore a particular Congregation may assume all and sole Power in Ordination though association may be had*: But, they must adde also, *and it is Requisite that they do assume it, though association may be had Conveniently*: or else, they conclude not against the Proposition. And were their Argument so framed, we must tell them, that, besides lesser faults, there would be these two great ones in it. 1. That there is more in the *Conclusion* then is in the *Premisses*. And 2. That it apparently consisteth of *four termes*: For in the *Major* Proposition it is, *where there* IS *a sufficient Presbytery*; the *Minor* sayeth onely, *there* MAY BE; which is a very materiall difference.

To their Major.

"*The Major* (say they) *hath two parts.* 1. *That a sufficient Presby-*"*tery may assume all and sole power in Ordination.* 2. *That it may do so,*"*though it may associate.*

Answ. 1. But we thinke, when they better consider of it, themselves will say, *That neither of these parts are true.* Not the first part; For They do not place the *whole power* in the *Presbytery*, but share it between *them and the people*; and, therein, sometimes they tell us, they go in a middle way between the *Brownists* and the *Presbyterians*. And if not the first part, much lesse the second.

Besides

Beſides that, in thus arguing, they confirme a power of *Ordination* in a *Claſſicall Presbytery*, which they would oppoſe; For, they cannot deny, but that in a *Claſſis* there may be a *ſufficient Presbytery*; Or, if they deny it, the Proof that they here bring, to prove the ſufficiency of a Presbytery in a *Congregation*, will much more ſtrongly prove the ſufficiency of a Presbytery in a *Claſſis*.

Nor can they help themſelves, in ſaying, That, by a *ſufficient Presbytery*, they mean *a Congregation that hath a ſufficient Presbytery* (thereby, either to *take in* the *People*, or *ſhut out* the *Claſſis*:) For, (beſides that this would not ſerve their turne to make a *Major* Propoſition to their Argument, and, that ſuch kind of expoſitions would ſeeme too harſh to be juſtified;) the Proof they annex would not ſerve to confirme it; For, they could not ſay, That *it is proved by* 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. (which ſpeaks nothing either of the *people*, or of a *Congregation*, but only of a *Presbytery*;) nor *That it was ſo voted by the Aſſembly*.

2. And as this is inconſiſtent with their owne principles, ſo neither can We allow it, to be in it ſelf, a truth, That, *wherever there is a ſufficient Presbytery* (eſpecially in our *Brethrens* ſenſe, who tell us elſewhere, That *two Elders*, though neither of them be a Miniſter of the Word, *are a ſufficient Elderſhip*) *they may aſſume all and ſole power in Ordination*, when yet they have opportunity and convenience to *aſſociate* with others: much leſſe, That, *it is Requiſite for them ſo to do*. For

1. We thinke it very poſſible, that there may be *ſo many Elders*, as might be ſufficient, for number, in ſome ſenſe, to be called an *Elderſhip*, and might perhaps be ſafely entruſted (under the inſpection of others) with managing *ſome affaires* which concern *one ſingle Congregation onely* at leaſt enow to make ſuch an Elderſhip, as our *Brethren* deeme ſufficient) whom, yet, to inveſt with *ſuch a power* as our *Brethren* here claime for them, would be very unſafe: nor do we beleeve that Chriſt hath ſo inveſted them. For, we do not thinke it to be the will of Chriſt, that *every ſuch number of Elders* as our *Brethren* account a ſufficient Elderſhip (conſiſting perhaps but of two ruling Elders) ſhould be entruſted with ſuch a power, as to be *ſole judges of the fitneſſe of a perſon for the Miniſtry*, and, actually to *ordaine him thereunto*, ſo as, he muſt thenceforth be *owned as a miniſter of Chriſt*, by all *other* Churches, as well as that to whom theſe Elders belong (for we cannot thinke, as perhaps our *Brethren* doe, that a Miniſter is a miniſter ONLY *to his owne Congregation*, and may *there only* performe miniſteriall acts:) Much leſſe That they are to be truſted with *all and ſole power* therein; and, That they might do it, not only *inconſultis*, but even *renitentibus omnibus vicinis Eccleſiis*:

And, least of all, That they may *assume* such a power (whether others allow it them or no) so soon as *they deeme themselves* such a sufficient Eldership (for who but themselves shall be Judges of it?) and, That it is *requisite* that they so doe, yea though they might *associate*, and that *conveniently*.

2. Nor are we such friends to *Classicall* Presbyteries because *Classicall* as, to affirme it *Requisite for every Classicall Presbytery, to assume all, and sole power in Ordination*. For we hold it very possible that in a *Classis*, where there may be Elders sufficient for number, to be called an *Eldership* (for we list not to dispute the *minimum quod sic*) their *Number* may be yet so *small*, or their *Abilities* so *weake*, or their *Judgements* (at least many of them) so *erroneous*, or their *Lives* so *corrupt*, that we should not hold it requisite to *intrust them with a power of Ordination*, when they may with convenience associate with others better qualified.

And, if our *Brethren* say, This is but a *particular case and extraordinary*; and, That we will not judge it much considerable in making the ordinary rule, which cannot be supposed to provide particularly for all cases possibly incident: We say the like for their *sufficient Presbytery* in a *particular Congregation*. For, we thinke it will be a case as extraordinary, to find, in a *particular Congregation*, a Presbytery *sufficient to be intrusted with all and sole power of Ordination*. We beleeve that such a Presbytery as that in *Charenton* neer *Paris*; or, such as was, in the debate of this point, supposed possible, (*viz.* a particular Congregation having six or eight preaching Presbyters constantly imployed in the Ministery,) are not like to be the Precedents of ordinary Congregations, or Congregationall Presbyteries in this Kingdome. And, if ever such a thing should happen, it will be *then* time enough to consider of that extraordinary case, Whether it be *more requisite* for that Eldership, To assume the whole & sole power of Ordination; or, To associate with the Elders of other neighbour Congregations, if (as the Proposition supposeth) they may with convenience so doe, rather then make such a precedent (though themselves should be thought able for such a worke) for other Congregations or Presbyteries lesse sufficient to claime the like, to the prejudice of themselves, as well as of the neighbour Churches?

3. Neither can we allow, that even *those Classicall Presbyteries* who may be conceived *most sufficient* to be entrusted with a power of Ordination, may therefore *assume all and sole power in it*, without Appeale or Subordination to superiour Assemblies; at least, when such Superiour Assemblies may conveniently be injoyed. Yet, such is that *whole and sole power* which our *Brethren* challenge for *particular Congregations*; and that, not onely for *some* particular Congregations, but for *all*; not

only where there is *a ſufficient Presbytery* (as here they ſpeak) that is, *any two Elders*; but alſo where there *is not*: for even a *Congregation without Elders*, are by them ſuppoſed to have the whole, and ſole power of Ordination within themſelves: ſo as, they neither *ſtand in need of any Power without themſelves* for the doing of it, nor may there be *any Appeal from them* in it, nor may *any but themſelves* Ordaine for them. And if any thing leſſe then this be allowed them, they would not think it to be *All and Sole power*. If, in *Government*, there be ſomewhat which *themſelves alone may not performe*, or that there be *Appeals from them* to Superiour Aſſemblies, or that *any others but themſelves* might (in reference to them) exerciſe it, they would not think that they had *all and ſole power in Government*: So for *Ordination*, if either themſelves alone *may not Ordaine*; or, any others *Ordaine for them*; or that, in matter of Ordination, there may be *Appeals from them*; they would not think that they have *all and ſole power in Ordination* allowed to them.

"*The former part* (*that a ſufficient Preſbytery may aſſume all and Sole* "*power in Ordination*) *is proved* (ſay they) 1 Tim. 4. 14. *by the laying on* "*of the hands of the Preſbytery, as is Voted by the Aſſembly.*

Anſ. By *a ſufficient Presbytery* we ſuppoſe they mean, *every ſufficient Presbytery*, or every number of Presbyters, who are ſufficient to be called a Presbytery; (for, if their *Major* Propoſition be not *Univerſall*, their Argument will conclude nothing:) And, if ſo, We deny, that *the Aſſembly hath ever voted*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. to prove, that *every ſuch Preſbytery*, (at leaſt according to our *Brethrens* judgement, concerning a ſufficient Presbytery) *may aſſume all, and Sole power in Ordination*. Nor is this at all made out by what they adde; ["*Which is the onely Scripture* "*brought for Ordination by ordinary Elders*;] For, if it were ſo, yet, it is one thing to vote, That *Ordination may be performed by ordinary Elders*; another thing to vote, That *every company of ſuch Elders hath all and ſole power in Ordination*. Nor doe we think our *Brethren* will allow this to follow from that other.

And we have the leſſe reaſon to believe, that the place alledged will prove, That *every particular Eldership* may aſſume all, and ſole power of Ordination (even when they might conveniently aſſociate,) ſo as they *Alone*, & *Onely* they may there Ordaine: Not onely 1. becauſe of *Pauls* dyning in that Ordination (as our *Brethren* elſewhere aſſert from 1 Tim. 2. 6.) Who was not a fixed member of any Particular Eldership: but likewiſe 2. becauſe even *that Presbytery* there ſpoken of, by whom *Timothy* was ordained, ſeemes not to be the Presbytery of any *Particular Congregation*, having power to Ordaine Officers for themſelves onely;

ly; but, a Presbytery made up of *Elders from severall places*; as *Derbe*, *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, and the region round about, as is probable from *Act.* 16. 1, 2. compared with *Act.* 14. 6. as is observed by *Apollonius*, (out of the Belgick interpreters) in a treatise of his directed to this Assembly, from the *Wallachian* Churches, *Cap.* 6. *Quest.* 2. So that, how this place can prove, That, in every *Sufficient Presbytery*, there is *All and Sole power of Ordination*; so as themselves alone may ordaine, and none but themselves have power to joyne in it; and, That it is *Requisite they doe assume this power* to themselves we doe not discerne. Especially when as 3. the Apostle *Paul* (whose authority certainly was as great as the authority of a particular Eldership) thought it *requisite* that *others* as well as himself should joyn in *Timothies Ordination*, and thought it no disparagement to Associate with them.

Apollon. *Consideratio quarundam controversiarium*, c. 6. q. 2.

"*The second part (that they may doe this, though they might Associate)*
"*appears* (say they) 1. *Because association doth neither adde to, nor diminish*
"*the power of a Presbytery; it is by way of Accumulation, not Privation, as*
"*is acknowledged by the Reformed Churches.*

Ans. Our *Brethren* taking it now for granted, That the *Presbytery* mentioned 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. (where *Timothy*, an *Evangelist*, and so not an Officer of *one single Congregation*, was ordained) was a *particular Presbyterie*, and not *Classicall*, or made up of Elders of severall Congregations; and That, beside this particular Presbyterie, there was *none else* that either *did*, or *had power* to joyne with them; and, That they did assume *all and sole power* in Ordination, (which perhaps at another time they would not grant, because of the peoples interest;) and, That it was *Requisite* for them so to doe; and consequently, That *every sufficient Presbyterie* (that is, *every Presbytery*; for our *Brethren* will not say, that any Presbytery is *insufficient*, although consisting but of two ruling Elders) *may assume*, yea, and that it is *requisite that they doe* assume, *all and sole power*, and not associate with others: That which they now attempt to prove, is, That *an Opportunity to Associate, even with Convenience, doth not hinder* but that they may thus assume; Yea, and that it is requisite so to doe. For, we are not now disputing, *what may be done in some possible cases*; as, if a single Congregation were cast upon some remote Island, or in the midst of Heathens, Turkes, Pagans, or even amongst Papists, or the like, where either there be none to Associate with, or onely such as would make such Association Destructive to them, (for, what power they may assume or exercise in such a case, is not the Question now in hand:) But *whether even there, where they may conveniently Associate, it be yet Lawfull and Requisite that every*

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Preſbytery (at leaſt every *ſufficient* Presbytery) *do aſſume all and ſole power of Ordination?*

To the reaſon they alleadge (*becauſe Aſſociation doth neither adde to, nor diminiſh the power of a Preſbytery*) we anſwer.

1. We are glad to hear our *Brethren* acknowledge that Aſſociation doth not *Diminiſh* the power of a Presbytery: for, if ſo, then why do they deny that power to *diverſe Presbyteries* aſſociated into one *Claſſis*, which they allow to *each of them* ſingly? And why be our *Brethren* ſo affraid of it, and repreſent it, upon all occaſions, ſo prejudiciall to Congregations, and to their power? If the power of a Presbytery be not diminiſhed by aſſociating with others; and this, acknowledged by the reformed Churches, (as our *Brethren* here intimate) we know little reaſon why they ſhould be ſo averſe from it.

But 2. that, by Aſſociation, there is nothing *added* to the power of a Presbytery, we cannot grant them: for, we beleeve, that Presbyteries in Aſſociation, have more power (at leaſt Extenſively, if not Intenſively) then a ſingle Presbytery alone. And, though it were granted, That Presbyteries Aſſociated, could do *no other acts*, then each Presbytery ſingle; yet, their power might *extend further* then the power of a ſingle Presbytery.

3. If what they alleadge were true, That, by aſſociation there were neither *Addition, nor Diminution of Power*; yet doth not this prove ought, but that it may be *requiſite for them* to Aſſociate: Becauſe though there were no addition of *Power*, or *Authority*, yet there would be thereby an addition of *Sufficiency*, or *Ability*; and, in reference thereunto, it might be requiſite, at leaſt *for ſome*, to aſſociate: Yea, even thoſe who may be thought *moſt able*, if not for any *need of their owne* (as conceiving themſelves ſo ſufficient, that they want no help) yet at leaſt for *the good of others*, who may ſtand in need of help from them. Though they had ſingly *a like authority* to do the thing, yet in Aſſociation they will have a *greater ability* to doe it *well*. And therefore, if, by Aſſociation, there be no *Diminution of Power* (as our *Brethren* here affirme) and withall an *Addition of Ability*, it is requiſite, that where it may be had conveniently, it be made uſe of; and, conſequently, it is not requiſite that every ſingle Presbytery, though ſome way ſufficient, ſhould decline Aſſociation, and aſſume to themſelves all and ſole power.

And that the Inconſequence of this Reaſon may the more appeare, we ſhall propoſe a caſe that is like enough to fall out often in our *Brethrens* way. If in a Single Congregation of their way, there were no other Ruling Officers, but *one Paſtor* and *one Ruling Elder*, we beleeve

they would say, that *these* are a *sufficient Presbytery*; and that, if no more can be had, they may exercise the *whole power of an Eldership* to that Congregation; yet, if God afford opportunity to them of having another Minister, to be a *Teacher*, or one or more persons fit to be *ruling Elders*, we beleeve they would thinke it *requisite* to have a *larger Presbytery then that of two*: But we aske, WHY? since when *two more* be added to the former two, it will *neither adde to, nor diminish the power of the Presbytery*: For, those two (they suppose) had the entire power of a Presbytery, and the whole four can have no more, so that there is no *addition* of power; and why there should thereby be a *diminution* of power we cannot see. We suppose they would answer, *Because, though there be no addition of Power, yet there is an addition of Ability*, and these four are now more able to manage those affaires, then those two alone. And the like we say in the case of *Association*: For, though (as our *Brethren* affirme) it did neither *adde to, nor diminish the power*, yet diverse Presbyteries associated are *more able to manage that power*, then each of them single: (To say nothing of a multitude of other inconveniencies that are thereby likewise avoided.)

What our *Brethren* adde, That *it is by way of Accumulation, not Privation, as is acknowledged by the Reformed Churches*; We acknowledge likewise; being glad our *Brethren* do acknowledge it too. And, we hope, that *what they here make the foundation of their owne Argument, they will not afterwards deny, when we shall have occasion to make use of it.*

But, if they infer, That therefore, whatever a single Church might do alone, *when they did not, or could not associate* with others, they alone may do now, *when they may, or do associate*; we deny that Consequence. And we give reason for that deniall, from a practise that they must needs grant in their owne way. For, in a single Congregation where the Eldership consists but of *three Elders* (which according to our *Brethrens* principles is a very sufficient Presbytery) *any Two of these may performe any Presbyteriall act*, because they are the major part of the whole Eldership; But, in case this Eldership be encreased to the number of *five* (as well it may,) the act of *those two* shall not be *now* accounted the act of the *Eldership* (as before it was,) and that, Because there be *now* others adjoyned to them, who *before* were not. Yet, we suppose, our *Brethren* cannot deny, but that this *Addition of more members* to the Eldership, is by way of *Accumulation*, not of Privation; for the power is *not taken from any of the former members* by adding of these new ones, but *others are admitted to the same power*: And that *difference* which doth arise upon it, (That those two, could *before* performe a Presbyteriall act,

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but *now* cannot,) is *meerely Accidentall*; Becauſe, before, they were the major part of the Elderſhip, but, now, they are not. For they had not that power, *quatenus Two*, but, *quatenus the Major part*. And ſo it is in Aſſociation of divers Elderſhips in one *Claſſis*, for the performing of ſuch acts as they are all concerned in: and yet, this difference is by way of Accumulation properly, and not of Privation: for there is an *Accumulation* of the power of *more Elders* in the ſame judgement: and, if the Votes of *a few*, who were *before* able to have carried the buſineſſe, be not ſufficient *now* to do it, it is not becauſe their *Votes* are *leſſe valid in themſelves*, then they were before, but onely *ex accidenti*, becauſe they are not (now) *the Major part*.

They adde. 2. *If aſſociation be ſo neceſſarily required, where it may be had, then neither a Claſſicall, Provinciall, nor Nationall Presbytery can aſſume all and ſole power of Ordination, if there may be any other Claſſicall, Provinciall, or Nationall Presbytery, with whom they may aſſociate. And that there is, or may be always ſome, is neceſſarily to be ſuppoſed in theſe times of the Goſpell, if any Aſſociation ought to be.*

Anſw. This doth no way hurt us at all: For,

1. We do not ſay, that either *Claſſicall*, or *Provinciall* Aſſemblies may *aſſume all and ſole power*; but, that there may be *Appeales* from either, where there are higher Aſſemblies to appeale to: No, nor yet the *Nationall* Aſſembly, if there may be (with convenience) an Aſſociation larger then it: As we ſhew at large in our anſwer to our *Brethrens* reaſons againſt Subordination. A *Provinciall* or *Nationall* Aſſembly may *ordaine Miniſters*, as well as a *Claſſis*; yea, and may *depoſe* thoſe whom a Claſſis ordaineth: And we would ſay the like of a *ſuperior Aſſembly to a Nationall*, if there were a like opportunity of larger aſſociation.

Yet, 2. there is *leſſe danger* in truſting a *Claſſis*, or *Synod*, with a power of Ordination, then in truſting a *particular Congregation* with it, (as might eaſily be ſhewed, if it were needfull to mention the *inſufferable miſchiefes* that would ariſe, if *every Elderſhip in a Congregation* might ordaine for Miniſters whom they pleaſe, without controll) and therefore *more requiſite*, that Congregations do not aſſume that power. So that neither the thing ſuppoſed to Follow upon our Propoſition is any Abſurdity, nor is the Conſequence valid.

Eſpecially, if 3. we conſider that the Propoſition doth not ſay, (as they here ſuppoſe) that Aſſociation is *neceſſarily* required where it may be had, (which yet perhaps might have been ſaid more ſafely, then what our *Brethren* aſſert) but that is *very requiſite*, where it may be had with *convenience*.

To their Minor.

The Minor (*that there may be a sufficient Presbytery in a particular Congregation*) *is proved* (say they) 1. *by the second Proposition touching Church Government sent up to both Houses of Parliament* viz. [*A Presbytery consists of Ministers of the Word, and such other publike officers as are agreeable to, & warranted by the word of God to be Church governors, to joyne with the ministers in the government of the Church.*] *All which may be in a particular Congregation.*

Ans. How this of the Assembly should prove our *Brethrens* Proposition, we cannot understand. That a *Presbytery consists of Ministers & Ruling Elders*, we thinke our *Brethren* will not deny; But, will our *Brethren* hence infer, that, *where ever there be Ministers and ruling Elders, there is a sufficient Presbytery to performe All acts that belong to any Presbyteries?*

If so; then they must not deny, *Classicall, Provinciall and National Assemblies* to be *sufficient Presbyteries* (at least, if they be made up of *Ministers and ruling Elders*;) and that, they may *Ordaine, Excommunicate, Censure,* and do all Presbyteriall acts lawfull for a Presbytery to doe. If not; then, how doth This Proposition prove their *Minor?* We do not yet see the strength of this Consequence, That, *If a Presbytery consist of Ministers and Ruling Elders, Then there may be a sufficient Presbytery in a particular Congregation unto all acts*; and, particularly, unto *Ordination.* We say, That *Classes and Synods*, Provinciall, and Nationall, *consist of Ministers and Ruling Elders*; but, we doe not say, (nor can our *Brethren* infer it from our words) That, therefore, *there may be, in a single Congregation, a sufficient Classicall Presbytery*, or a sufficient *Provinciall, or Nationall Synod*; Either of which might yet with as good consequence, be affirmed, as that which our *Brethren* impose. That the Assemblies Proposition was *true*, we suppose our *Brethren* will not deny; (if they doe, they should not have laid that as a foundation of their Argument:) But, if they will argue from it, as not onely a *true*, but as a *reciprocall* Proposition, and an *adequate Definition of a Presbytery*; we desire they would first *owne it as such*, and we shall make use of it in due time: if not, they must not take that as granted on both sides, which neither the Assembly, nor Themselves admit.

They adde, 2. *Wherein consists the sufficiency of a Presbytery? The number of how Many Elders is not set or bounded by Institution. Suppose Two or Three; and, if more be requisite, in a particular Congregation, there may be Four or Five. And a Presbytery over many Congregations is acknowledged to be sufficient, though it consist of no more. If they have this power as a sufficient Presbytery, why not the other also? have they their pow-*

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only as having relation to many Congregations? Is that the eſſentiall re-
iſite to their ſufficiency? Here are Elders, and as many Elders, having
lation to a Church; and, the Argument uſed by the Reverend Aſſembly to
ove a Presbytery over many Congregations, is, that Elders are mentioned
relation to one Church.

Anſw. *The number of Elders* (ſay our Brethren) *is not ſet, or bounded*
inſtitution. Very true, therefore, ſay we; There may be more Elders
a Presbytery, then thoſe of one Congregation. And, if there may be,
hen, ſo often as it may conduce to the *generall good of the Church*, and
e *better edification of the whole body of Chriſt*, it is *requiſite* that there be
ore, if *conveniently* they may be had; And, conſequently, thoſe of one
ngle Congregation, not to aſſume to themſelves all and ſole power.
or, where there are no *particular bounds* ſet by *Inſtitution*, there the
enerall rules of Scripture muſt take place, for the ordering of ſuch par-
culars ſo as may tend moſt to the Edification and Good of the Whole
ody of Chriſt. Onely (upon this occaſion) we deſire our *Brethren* to
member what they affirmed in their Reaſons againſt Subordination of
ſſemblies. That *there muſt be the greateſt and moſt Expreſſe Warrant*
nd Deſignment for them in the Word, both for their Subordination and
Number, and for their Bounds and Power, or elſe they might not be owned:
nd, (comparing that Rule with their Aſſertion here) to conſider, whe-
er it had not need of ſome Limitation.

Upon this ſuppoſition our *Brethren* argue, That there may be *Two or*
Three, yea *Four or Five Elders* in a *ſingle Congregation*; and, the number
f Elders in a Presbytery not being ſet or bounded, it cannot be denied
ut *theſe may be ſufficient to make a Presbytery*. But this, if granted, doth
ot prove it *requiſite* that there ſhould be *no more*, where more may be
ad conveniently; or, that All Presbyteries muſt be reduced to the
inimum quod ſic; and, in that capacity, aſſume *all and ſole power*.

But, ſay they, *a Presbytery over many Congregations is acknowledged*
o be ſufficient, though they conſiſt of no more.

Anſw. If they meane, *no more then two or three*, we hardly beleeve, ei-
her that there are *any ſuch* Claſſicall Presbyteries; or, if there be, that
hey are acknowledged *ſufficient*; Yea, though they ſhould meane *no*
ore then four or five, if that number be made up of Preaching and Ru-
ing Elders together. But, if they ſuppoſe thoſe *Four or Five* to be all
Miniſters of the Word; we beleeve that it will be a *caſe ſo rare*, to finde
particular *Congregation* furniſhed with *ſo many able Miniſters*, as that
we need not trouble our ſelves much at preſent to make a Rule for ſuch
Caſe, but may deferre it, till that caſe falls out. Onely, we thinke,
hat, while that Congregation remaines ſo well furniſhed, they will have

no great occasion to ordaine more *for themselves*; and, that they assume all and sole power to ordaine *for others*, we suppose our *Brethren* will not affirme.

But, say our Brethren, *if they* (a Classicall Presbytery consisting of four or five) *have this power as a sufficient Presbytery, why not also the other*, (a Presbytery in a single Congregation consisting of as many?)

Answ. If, by *this power*, they meane, *all and sole power in Ordination*, we (for reasons before alleadged, both here, and in what we have said about Subordinations,) deny it, even of such a *Classicall* Presbytery, if they have Opportunity and Conveniency of Associating with others.

And, if at any time, either They, or a larger Presbytery, may assume all and sole power in Ordination, it is not *quatenus a sufficient Presbytery*; but, *quatenus* the *whole number of those who can conveniently associate.*

As, if in a remote Island (or in a like case) such a *Classicall Presbytery* as they speake of, where they cannot have opportunity to associate with other Churches, may assume All and Sole power of Ordination for their owne Churches; we would not say that they do this *quatenus a sufficient Presbytery*, or *quatenus so many*; but, *quatenus all that can conveniently associate*; and that, if they had opportunity of associating with more, they ought, notwithstanding such a *sufficiency*, so to do.

In like manner, if in a particular Congregation, according to our *Brethrens* principles, there were such a Presbytery as our *Brethren* speak of, they would say, (we beleeve) that this Presbytery might assume all and sole power of Ordination or of Government in that Congregation; but not *quatenus* a sufficient Number, or *quatenus* Five, but, *quatenus* All the Elders of that Congregation; for if to these *five* there shall be *six more* added, they will not say that the *first five* have (now) *all and sole power*; but, that the *other six* have their *share in it also*: not but that those five be now *as many*, and *as sufficient* as they were before, and as sufficient to constitute a *sufficient Presbytery* as before; but, because they are not *all*, as before they were? So that, what power they had before, they had it not *quatenus so many*; but, *quatenus the whole number.*

Therefore the decision of the Question, Whether a particular Congregation, or the Eldership of a particular Congregation may *assume all and sole power in Ordination*, doth not so much depend upon this, Whether that they have a *number sufficient to do the worke*; but on this, Whether They be the *onely persons concerned*, or interessed in it.

Wherefore, that which follows, [*Have they their power onely as having relation to many Congregations?* &c.] might have been spared. For, if there were *but one Congregation of Christians in the world*, They should have *all and sole power*; not, as being *but one Congregation*; but, as being *the Whole Church.*

As

As for the *Argument of the Aſſembly*, (to which the *Brethren* refer) proving *one Preſbytery in Jeruſalem over the many Congregations there*, becauſe *they are all mentioned as one Church*; what advantage it produceth to our *Brethren*, in the preſent buſineſſe, we cannot yet perceive. But as it ſerved then, to prove *many Congregations, to be under one Preſbytery*; ſo may it be of like uſe here, to prove, that *ſingle Congregations are not to aſſume all, and ſole power in Ordination.*

The Anſwer to their Second Argument.

Their Second Argument lies thus. *That which two Apoſtles being joyned together, might doe in a particular Congregation, that ordinary Elders may doe in a particular Congregation: But,* Paul *and* Barnabas *ordained Elders in particular Congregations, though they might Aſſociate. Therefore, &c.*

Anſ. This Argument concludes not at all againſt the Propoſition. The Propoſition ſayes, *It is not requiſite that they aſſume all, and ſole power in Ordination.* The Argument concludes, That *they may Ordaine*; not, That *they may aſſume all, and ſole power*; much leſſe, That it is *requiſite* for them ſo to doe. Our *Brethren* we think will not deny, but that *Paul* alone, being an *Apoſtle*, might Ordaine; and yet they ſuppoſe that *Barnabas* joyned with him: And if he, who might *alone Ordaine*, did not think it requiſite to aſſume all and ſole power in it, but *joyned with* Barnabas *therein*, having opportunity and convenience ſo to doe; why ſhould it be *more requiſite* now, for the *Elders of a particular Congregation*, to *diſclaime the conjunction of others* with them, when it may be had conveniently, and to *aſſume all and ſole power to themſelves?* And this we may the better inſiſt upon, becauſe it hath been ſometime urged (as a ground of our *Brethrens* opinion concerning *Non-communion of Churches*) that there was the *ſame relation* between *Apoſtles*, as there is between *Churches*; and therefore, that the example of *Pauls departing from* Barnabas, *Acts* 15. (whom yet he might not *excommunicate*, becauſe the Apoſtles were all *equall*, and one had not power over another;) may be a preſident of One Churches *Pronouncing a Sentence of Non-communion* againſt Another Church, which yet (becauſe of the parity between them) they may not *excommunicate*. Now, if *Pauls denying Communion* (as our *Brethren* ſuppoſe) with *Barnabas*, may be a preſident for *one Church* to *deny Communion* with another; Why ſhould not *Pauls joyning with Barnabas in Ordination*, be as good a preſident for *a like conjunction of Churches?* And, if *Paul*, who might himſelf Ordaine alone, thought it *requiſite to joyn* with *Barnabas*, when he might conveniently;

Why

Why should not a *particular Eldership* (though they had, as our *Brethren* suppose, a power to ordaine alone) think it as *requisite to joyne* with the Elders of other Churches, when they may conveniently? Can our *Brethren* think, that a particular Eldership of one Congregation, hath a greater Authority and Infallibility then *Paul* had? We have not yet forgotten what our *Brethren* told us (in their *Reasons* against alledging the instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*, for a patterne of *Presbyteriall Government*) *That the Apostles had Singly the same Power which they exercised joyntly*, Act. 6. Yet *they exercised it Together, because it fell out that they were Together, and it was* FIT *none of them should be excluded*: Which doth not onely confirme what we have here said before, upon the former Argument, That the *Sufficiency of a single Presbytery to perform the act of Ordination*, (if that were granted) is no reason, why it is not *requisite for that Presbytery to Associate*, when they may *conveniently*, and not *assume all and sole power to themselves*; (for, the Apostles had *each* of them a *sufficiency of power*;) But it doth also confirme that Inference, brought from the Instance of *Paul and Barnabas joyning in Ordination*; (and which might be also brought from the *Apostles joyning* together in *Act. 6.* to *ordain Deacons*, and from *Pauls joyning with ordinary Elders* to ordaine *Timothy*, as our Brethren say he did, beside many other instances of like nature) That, if *Paul and Barnabas* not onely did *joyne together*; but, it was FIT *they should doe so* (because *unfit that any of them should be excluded*) though *each* had a sufficient power; then, it is not onely *lawfull* that Elderships of severall Churches may joyne, but *fit* or requisite that they doe associate, when they may *conveniently* doe it.

To the particular Propositions of the Argument we answer as followeth.

To their Major.

For the Major Proposition, [*That which two Apostles being joyned together might do in a particular Congregation, that, ordinary Elders may do, in a particular Congregation*] we appeale to our Brethrens conscience, Whether they beleeve it to be true. The Emphasis lyes in the words [*being joyned together:*] For, they will not say, That, what an *Apostle* might doe *alone* in a single Congregation, may be done by *ordinary Elders* in a single Congregation; because the Apostles did act many things (even in single Congregations) by a *power Apostolicall*, not imitable by ordinary Elders; But, what *two or more* of them did performe, being *joyned together*, may (say they) be performed by ordinary Elders: As if, what ever the Apostles did, *in Collegio*, they did as *ordinary Elders*, or by a power

power common to them with ordinary Elders. If this be a truth *now*, then was it a truth alſo in the Ordination of *Deacons*, *Acts 6.* (which our *Brethren* denyed, when the Aſſembly made uſe of that place, as appears in their Reaſons againſt the Inſtance of *Jeruſalem:*) unleſſe the ſame Propoſition which is a *truth* when it makes *for them*, be a *falſhood* when it is alledged *againſt them*. If our *Brethren* think it *not to be a Truth*; they ſhould not *here* affirme it as ſuch, and ground their Argument upon it; eſpecially having *there* denyed it. But let us examine their proof of it.

The Conſequence, ſay they, *appears thus*; *If the Argument brought by the Reverend Aſſembly doe hold*, viz. *that when the Apoſtles met together for Ordination, or for ordering the affaires of the Church of* Jeruſalem, *they met as ordinary Elders* (*which they have voted*) *then*, &c.

Anſ. But, what if the Argument brought by the Aſſembly doe *not* hold? (As our *Brethren* think it *doth not*, for they there deny it.) What then ſhould become of our *Brethrens* Propoſition, which is built upon no other ground, but a *Suppoſition* which *themſelves* will not grant?

Yea, ſuppoſe the Aſſembly *had voted*, what our *Brethren* here ſay they have, (ſomewhat like this, we confeſſe, they have voted) and that the Argument of the Aſſembly doth hold; Will our *Brethren* ſay (as they ſhould have ſaid, if they meant to prove their *Conſequence*, as they call it, or *Major Propoſition*) *that then, what two Apoſtles joyned together might doe, that ordinary Elders may doe?* No: But all they ſay, is this, *then ſurely, when* Paul *and* Barnabas *met to ordaine Elders in particular Congregations, it is to be averred, that they met for that act as ordinary Elders.* But what is this to the proofe of the *Major* Propoſition? there is not a word of *Paul and Barnabas* in the *Major* Propoſition, (either *joyning as ordinary Elders*; or *joyning at all*;) but onely a Generall Aſſertion; that *What two Apoſtles joyned together may doe in a particular Congregation, that ordinary Elders may do in a particular Congregation:* Of which generall Propoſition our *Brethren* give no proof at all.

For our own part (though our *Brethren* would ſeeme to ground this aſſertion upon ſomewhat voted by us) we cannot aſſert to the truth of it; becauſe, though we think *now* as we did *before*, That the Apoſtles in the Ordination of Deacons, *Act. 6.* did act *as Elders*, or by a *power common to them with Elders*; and, That they are therein a patterne to be imitated by Elderſhips; yet we neither then did, nor doe now believe, That *what ever two Apoſtles joyned together might performe, that ordinary Elders may performe* (whether *in a particular Congregation*, or elſewhere:) Yea, in that very Inſtance, *Acts 6.* (as we told our *Brethren* then

in our Answer to those Reasons) *we doubt not to say, that they did act partly as Apostles, partly as Elders*: something they did by a power Apostolicall, and not imitable by ordinary Elders; something they did by a power common to them with Elders.

And we think our *Brethren* are of the same opinion; for, they there tell us, *that in that very act* (of Ordination) *they must needs act as Apostles; for they doe not simply Ordaine the Men, but doe anew, by vertue of Apostolicall authority, Institute the Office of Deacons, which none but the Apostles could immediately, and at first, have done.*

But, how this consisteth with their present Assertion (that *what two Apostles together might doe, ordinary Elders may doe*) we cannot tell, but leave it to themselves to reconcile. The inserting of the words [*in a particular Congregation*] (which, whether they intended as a limitation or no, we cannot tell) will no way help it: for, if this erecting of a new Office, *were not performed* by them in a particular Congregation (as our *Brethren* think it was) yet doubtlesse, they cannot deny but it *might have been*; and, their Proposion speaks not onely of what two (or more) Apostles *did*, but what they *might doe*.

If our *Brethren* should desert this Generall Proposition, (as we think they have cause to doe) and urge onely thus much, That *if the Apostles at Jerusalem, joyning together to ordaine Deacons*, (whether it were a Church of one or more Congregations) *did act as Elders. Then* Paul *and* Barnabas *joyning together to ordaine Elders, did act as Elders*: Yet, even this inference would not hold; For there is a great difference between the Apostles performing ordinary acts of Elders, in an ordinary way at *Jerusalem*, when it was a *Church already constituted and setled*; and that of *Paul* and *Barnabas* in the *first erecting* and constituting of Churches in places *where before there were none*, affixing Elders to them. So that, the latter being a work *extraordinary*, and more peculiar to the *Apostles*, whose great work it was to *Plant the Gospell* throughout the world, even in places where before it had not been heard of, may with much more reason be affirmed to be the exercise of an *Apostolicall power*, then that of performing *Ordinary Acts of Government* in an *Ordinary way* at *Jerusalem*, where the Church had been setled, an regularly governed for some time before. And thus much for their *Major* Proposition; we proceed next, to consider their *Minor*.

To their Minor.

The Minor (say they) *hath two parts*, 1. Paul *and* Barnabas *ordained Elders in particular Congregations*. 2. *That they might Associate.*

But, there is, or at least there should have been, a *third* thing in that Pro-

Propoſition, very materiall to their purpoſe (which it concerned them as well to prove as theſe two,) namely, That *Paul* and *Barnabas* were *joyned together* in that ordination; If not, it ſerves not their turne; for, they do not ſay, that what two Apoſtles might *ſeverally* performe; but, what two Apoſtles being *joyned together*, might performe, may be performed by ordinary Elders: and yet, for ought our *Brethren* have ſhewed to the contrary, ſome of theſe Elders might be ordained by *Paul*, ſome by *Barnabas*, and not all by both joyntly; and, if ſo, the inſtance would not be at all to their purpoſe. But this we doe not inſiſt upon.

Yea, there ſhould have been a *fourth* thing, ſomewhere added, if they would conclude againſt the Propoſition, *viz.* that, they were the Elders of *only one Congregation*. For, we never denied that *ordinary Elders*, may ordaine Elders *in* a particular Congregation; nor, that a Claſſis or Synod of *ordinary Elders*, may ordaine Elders *for* a particular Congregation. But the thing in Controverſie is, not what may be done IN *a particular Congregation*, but what may be done in it *by their owne particular Elders alone*, and is *requiſite ſo to be*, notwithſtanding the *conveniency* of *an Aſſociation with others*. And here, the Inſtance (in our apprehenſion) failes them exceedingly; for, though it were granted that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did ordaine as Elders; yet, who will ſay they did it *as the Elders of one Congregation Onely*? they being as much Elders of *all the neighbour* Congregations, as of that *one* wherein our *Brethren* ſuppoſe them to have ordained? and (if they muſt be called an *Elderſhip*) they might as well be ſtyled a *Claſſicall*, or (if you will) an *Oecumenicall Elderſhip*, as a *Congregationall*.

And then, a *fift*, and *ſixt* thing ſhould have been caſt in to all the former; namely, *Paul* and *Barnabas* did not onely *ordaine*, but did *aſſume all and ſole power in Ordination*; and, that *it was requiſite* ſo to do, ſo as, no others might either *challenge* an intereſt, or be *permitted* to joyne with them therein. But, of theſe things (although very neceſſary to make out their Argument) our *Brethren* ſay nothing. We proceed therefore to conſider thoſe two particulars which they endeavour to prove.

1. "*That, theſe were particular Congregations wherein they ordained* "*Elders appears* (ſay they) *becauſe its not ſuppoſeable that the Cities, much* "*leſſe the regions round about, where the Apoſtles preached and erected Chur-* "*ches* (*as appears by* Acts 13. 49. *compared with* Acts 14. 6. 21, 22, 23.) "*were growne to many Congregations before the Apoſtles appointed Elders* "*over them. For the Apoſtles who were to preach in all places, would not*

"stay so long in one place: and, it was their course, when there were many, "as at Derbe, Acts 14. 31. to set Elders to them.

Answ. When our *Brethren* say in the first part of their *Minor*, that *Paul and Barnabas ordained Elders in particular Congregations*; they intend it, we suppose, in one of these two senses, Either (first) that *the act of Ordaining was by* Paul *and* Barnabas *performed in particular Congregations*; referring the words *in particular Congregations* (in their proposition) to the word *Ordained*; and the words, κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, (in *Acts* 14. 23. χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν) to the word χειροτονήσαντες, understanding it thus, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did at each of these places, (*Derbe*, *Lystra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*) fast, pray, ordaine Elders, and commend them to the grace of God. And it will not at all prejudice our cause to allow them this sense: For we shal say that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did ordaine Elders in *each* of those Congregations, by a power which they had equally respecting *all of them*, (like as when a Classicall Eldership doth ordain an Elder in a particular Congregation) and not that they were ordained by a full and sole power residing in each of those Congregations, in which those Ordinations are supposed to be performed: And that the rather because it is not said that *each Congregation* or *Church* did ordaine Elders *for themselves*, But, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did ordaine Elders *for them*; and the power of *Paul* and *Barnabas* was as much *extrinsecall* to each of the Churches, and as little confined to them, as the power of a *Classicall Eldership*, to each particular Congregation within their limits. But if our *Brethren* thus interpret the words κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, to denote the *different places* wherein those Elders were ordained; they cannot well urge the words κατ' ἐκκλησίαν to be *restrictive* of their power, as if they were onely πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, each of them Elders in their owne particular Church only, and had not power at all out of their owne Congregations to joyn with the Elders of other Churches to act in common for the good of them all.

Or else (secondly) they mean it in this sense, That, *the Elders Ordained by* Paul *and* Barnabas *were settled in particular Congregations*; referring the words *in particular Congregations* to the word *Elders*; and the words κατ' ἐκκλησίαν to the word πρεσβυτέρους, or to the word αὐτοῖς, understanding it thus, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* ordained Elders for them (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν) *respective*, viz. *for each Church their own Elders*: And this seemes rather to be their meaning, because that all along in the pursuit of this Argument, they do promiscuously use the phrase of *Ordaining to them* and *Ordaining in them*: And this interpretation also we may without prejudice allow them. For, as we conceive it much con-

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ducing to edification, that where the numbers of Beleevers are great, or their habitations far diſtant, they ſhould for more convenience be diſtributed into ſeverall Congregations; ſo we judge it likewiſe conducing to edification, that each of thoſe Congregations ſhou'd have one or more appointed over them to take the ſpeciall care of them: But, that the power of the Paſtors or Elders in thoſe ſeverall Congregations, ſhould be ſo limited each to the peculiar care of his own particular Congregation, as that they may not joyn and act together, in things of common concernment for the good of all of them, our *Brethren*, we ſuppoſe, will not be able to prove; and what they have produced to that purpoſe, in their *Reaſons* againſt the joyning of *many Congregations under one Preſbyteriall Government*, and againſt the *Subordination of Aſſemblies for Government*; we have in our *Anſwers* thereunto already conſidered. But if our *Brethren* would be underſtood in his latter ſenſe; they do very much vary from the thing in hand; For the thing which at preſent we are inquiring after is not, For whom, but By whom, theſe Elders were Ordained: and this, though granted, will no way prove, that they were Ordained each of them *by* a full and ſole power reſiding in one *Congregation only*. We ſay likewiſe, that if they underſtand κατ' ἐκκλησίαν in *Acts* 14. 23. in this latter ſenſe, (to denote the *Charge* to which thoſe Elders were appointed) then there is nothing in the text concerning the particular *place* wherein the Ordination was performed; thoſe Elders might, for ought appears to the contrary, be all ordained at *one* Time and Place, when *Paul* and *Barnabas* at their departure out of thoſe parts commended them to the grace of God; at which might be preſent, if not more *Congregations*, yet at leaſt *Members* of more Congregations, then one.

We ſay therefore in generall, to this firſt part of their *Minor*, That, whether it be taken in the one ſenſe or in the other, it makes nothing to the preſent purpoſe; For we are not now inquiring, either *in what Place* or *to what Charge*, but *by what Authority*, Elders then were or now may be Ordained: And therefore we might ſpare the paines of Examining the three proofs which they bring for the Confirmation of it; Since that it is no more then what is ordinarily practiſed by Claſſicall Eldership, who do *in* a particular Congregation ordaine Paſtors *for* a particular Congregation; Though yet others may be and often are preſent beſide thoſe that are Members of that one particular Congregation; and thoſe ordained *for particular Congregations*, are likewiſe to take care *in Common* for things that do concern *many Congregations*. Yet the three proofes which they have produced we will examine in order.

For the first Reason, wherein they alledge that *it is not supposeable that those Cities and the regions round about were grown to many Congregations before the Apostles appointed Elders to them.*

We Answer. If they meane onely, That there were not in *each City*, and *each Village* of the regions adjacent, *many Congregations* before the Apostles appointed Elders: We thinke so too. But, if their meaning be, that in those Cities and the regions adjacent, *taken altogether* (*collectivè*,) there were not many Congregations before the Apostles ordained Elders to them; the text is manifestly against them: Because, though there be mention of *Preaching the Gospell* in *Antioch* of *Pisidia*, in *Iconium*, *Lystra*, *Derbe*, and the regions about, *Acts* 13. 14. 49. *Act.* 14. 6, 8, 20. yet, we read not of any *forming* of them into *distinct Churches* and *ordaining of Elders* to them, till they had been at *all* those places, *Acts* 14. 21, 23. and, by that time, there was not onely a *competent number of Disciples* to make a *Congregation*, but a *competent number of Congregations* too, to make a *Classis*. And it will be hard for our *Brethren* to prove, either that there were no more present at the Ordination of each of those severall Elders, then those of that one particular Congregation wherein he was to be placed; or, That they were so confined *each* to the care of *his owne* particular Congregation, as that they might not at all joyne in the common care of all.

2. "*Againe* (say they) *this was the first Ordination of Elders to those* "*places, and therfore must needs be to particular Congregations*; *for, a* "*Classis is made up of the Elders of many Congregations.*

Ans. We deny not but that they were appointed *to particular Congregations* as their more peculiar charge; but it doth not follow, that therefore the Elders of these particular Congregations were not as well in common to take care of the whole that concerned them all, as each in particular of his owne speciall charge; or that they were ordained *in* a particular Congregation without the presence or assistance of any others; much lesse that they were ordained *by* a particular Congregation, assuming all and sole power in ordination. They might be ordained *to a particular Congregation*, though they were ordained IN *a meeting* of *many Congregations*, and BY the *Elderships* of *many Congregations*, united. Nor doth it follow, that they were Elders to particular Congregations *onely*; for, they might well, as a *Classis*, take care of the whole in matters of *joint concernment*, and yet each *in their owne Congregation* deal in those things that did more particularly concern them. *For a Classis is made up of the Elders of many Congregations*, as our *Brethren* themselves speake. But, how it should prove that they were *not a Classis*, because

Elders

Elders to particular Congregations, or, becauſe it was *the firſt ordination of Elders in thoſe places*, we doe not underſtand. For, what hinders, but that, at the ſame time, they might be appointed both in common to take care of the whole; and, in particular, each of his owne particular Congregation; and ſo, to endeavour both ſingly, and joyntly, to the utmoſt of their power, the good of all and every of thoſe Congregations, as opportunity and occaſion ſhould be offered? Indeed, if, as ſoone as there were Diſciples converted in *one City* or Village, the Apoſtles had affixed Elders *to them* (and to *them onely*) before there had been any converted in a ſecond place: and then, at that ſecond place, had erected a Church and *Elders to them*, and *them onely* (independent on that former Church) before any had been converted in a third or fourth place; and ſo had conſtituted in each place a *Church* and *Elders* ſo diſtinct as to have *no dependence* on, or *entercourſe* with any other Church, which either was already, or ſhould afterwards be erected: if thus (we ſay) they had done, there were ſome reaſon why our *Br:* might bring ſuch a conſequence as this: But, if they thinke it was ſo, they greatly miſtake: for we read not either of erecting and forming of a diſtinct Church, or of ordaining Elders in *any* of thoſe places, til there were Diſciples converted in *all* of them, as is undeniably manifeſt by the whole ſeries of the 13. and 14. Chapters. And therefore, that ſuppoſition, *that it was their courſe when there were* ἱκανοὶ, (perſons met to make up a Congregation or Church) preſently *to ſet Elders to them*, is built upon the ſand: And the contrary is evident; for though at *Iconium* Acts 14.1. there were, not only ἱκανοὶ, but πολὺ πλῆθος, a great multitude, yet there is no mention of Ordination, till afterwards.

"Laſtly (ſay our Brethren) *they ordained Elders* κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, *and* αὐτοῖς; *and, at their ordaining, they faſted and prayed, commending them to the grace of God; which faſting and praying being (according to the principles of both) to be in particular Congregations, it followeth, that the Churches to which theſe Elders were appointed, were particular Congregation.*

Anſw. If they would prove what they undertook, They ſhould have ſaid, *therefore they were ordained* IN *thoſe particular Congregations*; or rather, that *they were ordained* BY *particular Congregations*, not, that *they were ordained* TO *particular Congregations*:: We never denied that the Churches, to which they, (at leaſt ſome of them) were ordained might be particular Congregations, no more then we do deny that Miniſters ordained by Claſſis, or Synods, be ordained *to* particular Congregations; and yet, the authority *by* which, and the Aſſembly,

bly, or meeting *in* which they were ordained might be more then o
one particular Congregation; And, if the *many thouſands* at *Jeruſalem*
who were converted before the Ordination of Deacons *Acts* 6. yea
all the *myriads* converted there before *Pauls* comming to *Jeruſalem*
Acts 21. (which was a long time after) were no more then *might con*
veniently meet together in one place for all ordinations as our *Brethren*
would have us to beleeve; they will give us leave, we hope, to think
it poſſible, if not probable, that the beleevers converted by *Paul* and
Barnabas in ſo ſhort a time, at *Antioch*, *Iconium*, *Lyſtra* and *Derbe*
were not ſo numerous but that they, or at leaſt more then one parti
cular Congregation of them, might meet together in one place at the
Ordination of Elders: at leaſt divers *Brethren* from ſeverall Congre
gations might be preſent at it. What they alleadge (*that Faſting and*
Prayer are, according to the principles of both, to be in particular Congre
grations) makes nothing to the contrary: for, if they meane no more
but this, That there may be Faſting and Prayers in a Particular Con
gregation; or, That ſometimes a particular Congregation is to faſt and
pray; we doe not deny *to accord to our principles*: But, if they intend
That there *may no more* joyn together in Faſting and Prayer then thoſe
of a particular Congregation; or, That ſeverall Congregations may
not lawfully joyne together in it; it may perhaps be according to our
Brethrens principles, but not according to ours. That *they ordained El*
ders κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, and ἀυτοῖς, we grant; they ordained Elders for
thoſe of *Derbe*, *Lyſtra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*; theſe being the ἀυτοὶ
for whom the Elders were ordained: and thoſe Elders ſo ordai
ned had their particular Congregations aſſigned them κατ' ἐκκλησίαν
where they were principally to attend; it being moſt conducing to the
generall good of beleevers, that they ſhould be diſtributed into ſeve
rall Churches or Congregations, and have particular Paſtors appointed
over them. Nevertheleſſe this doth not at all hinder, but that beſide
the particular care which each had of his owne charge, they might all
of them joyntly have common care of the whole.

But how this or any thing elſe that can be made out of that Text
doth contribute ought to our *Brethrens* purpoſe, we do not ſee. For, if it
were granted, That they were ordained *in* particular Congregations
it would not at all advance their cauſe, unleſſe they prove withall, That
Onely a particular Congregation had to doe in it: becauſe it is not ſo
much materiall, *in what place* they be ordained, as, *by what authority*
and, if a *Claſſicall Presbytery* do ordaine Elders *in* a particular Congre
gation, it cannot be therefore ſaid, that the *particular Congregation*
doth *aſſume all and ſole power* in it. And ſo, though *Paul* and *Barnabas*
(wh

(who were as much Elders to *all* theſe Congregations, as to *any one* of them) did in ſome one Congregation ordaine Elders, it cannot be thence inferred That this One Congregation did either *aſſume* or *execute* all and ſole power in it; perhaps, not *any* power (further then of *Aſſent*,) for, it is not ſaid that *they* did ordaine, but that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did ordaine *for them.*

2. "*For the ſecond* [*that they might aſſociate*] *it appears* (ſay they) "*becauſe there were Churches in the Regions round about. And yet the A-*"*poſtles mention no Aſſociation* (*which they would have done if that had* "*been the way:*) *for when they did things with ordinary Elders, it is thus* "*recorded,* The Apoſtles and Elders. *But, they commend them to the grace* "*of God, as* Paul *did the Church of* Epheſus, *Acts* 20. 32. *as having ſuffi-*"*cient means to perpetuate ſucceſſion, and to ordaine other Elders, if any* "*ſhould die, as alſo to build them up unto eternall life.*

Anſw. If they meane, That the *Apoſtles* might aſſociate: We think ſo too; and, not onely, That they *might*, but That they *did* aſſociate and joyne with *every Church* where they came, at leaſt with *theſe* Churches, to whom they actually ordained Elders: and we ſuppoſe our *Brethren* will not deny it. If they mean, That the *Churches* might aſſociate; neither do we in this contradict them; for, we beleeve they *might*, and *did* aſſociate; but, we thinke they contradict themſelves in it: for, they argued even now, that *this being the firſt Ordination of Elders to thoſe places, it muſt therefore needs be to particular Congregations*; whereas, if theſe Churches, even in this firſt ordination of Elders to them, *might aſſociate* (as our *Brethren* now ſay,) where then lieth the neceſſity of this inference, That it muſt needs be to particular Congregations, *becauſe it was the firſt ordination of Elders to thoſe places?* They would firſt prove, That the Apoſtles ordained Elders to particular Congregations, becauſe it was *impoſſible they ſhould aſſociate*; and now, they would prove, That they did not aſſociate, *though they might.*

They might aſſociate (ſay our Brethren) *becauſe there were Churches in the regions round about.*

Anſw. That there were *Beleevers* in the regions thereabout, we grant, becauſe *Acts* 13. 49. mentioneth *the whole region*, ὅλην τὴν χώραν, as well as the Town of *Antioch*; and *Acts* 14. 6. mentioneth *the region round about*, τὴν περίχωρον, as well as the Cities of *Derbe* and *Lyſtra*; divers of the Country people thereabout beleeved the word, as well as thoſe that dwelt in the Cities mentioned. But, it is not ſaid, there were *Churches* in the regions round about, and that there were *Elders affixed to them*, who might joyne with *Paul* and *Barnabas* in ordaining Elders

for *Antioch*, *Iconium*, *Lystra* and *Derbe*; Nor is it likely that the *regions about* these Cities were by *Paul* and *Barnabas* sooner formed into Churches, and supplied with Elders, then *the Cities themselves*. And, when our *Brethren* said before, *that this was the first ordination of Elders to these places*, we suppose they meant, That neither the *Cities* mentioned, nor the *villages* about them, had, before this time, Elders ordained to them; and not, That there had been a *former* Ordination of Elders for those *villages*, though not for the *Cities* themselves. If they thinke otherwise, they might have done well to have shewed the reasons why they thinke so; for we may as well say, That there is no mention of such *Churches and Elders*; as, they, That there is no mention of *Association* with them.

As for the *Association of these Churches*: we beleeve, That the word αὐτοῖς [*for them*,] takes in, not onely the Cities of *Antioch*, *Iconium*, *Derbe* and *Lystra*, but the περίχωρον also, *the regions round about them*, as appendices to them; and, That, the Ordination here spoken of, is the *first* Ordination of Elders, either for the *Cities*, or the *villages* about them: and therefore, though the Churches *within these confines* might, and (as we conceive) did associate *among themselves*; yet, that there were *other Churches* already formed, with whom they might thus *conveniently associate*, and whose *Elders* might joyne with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, in ordaining Elders to *these Churches*, doth not appear.

Now, if the Elders of *all* these Churches were ordained *at once*, either at an *Assembly of all these Churches* (if their members or distances were not so great, but that they might conveniently meet;) or, *of Brethren from* all or diverse of them; the reason then is plaine, why there is no mention of the Elders of *some* of these Churches joyning with the Apostles in ordaining Elders to *some other* of them; because before this *joynt* ordination of Elders to *all of them*, there were no Elders in *any* of them: and, *of any other persons*, who are *not Elders*, either ordaining alone, or joyning in ordination with others (what ever our *Brethrens* principles about it may be) the Scripture is wholly silent. Nor is there any thing in the text to the contrary, but that they might be ordained *all at once*, if κατ' ἐκκλησίαν be to be interpreted of the *Charge* to which they are appointed, as our *Brethren* seem to take it; For, it *speakes but Once* of Ordaining Elders, and that as *one of the last acts* done by *Paul* and *Barnabas* before their *departing out of these coasts*; and, joyned with their *commending them to God*, or soleman taking leave of them, (according as the same or a like phrase is used *Acts* 20. 32. as our *Brethren* observe, and *Acts* 15. 40.) Yea, our *Brethren* themselves say, *they ordained Elders, and, at their ordaining, they fasted and prayed, commending them*

THEREBY

THEREBY *to the grace of God*; making it as it were one act. Neither can it be inferred from their having *diſtinct Charges*, that therefore they were ordained *in different places*; For, it is not neceſſary that the Elders muſt be ordained either in *the preſence of* that people, amongſt whom they are to reſide, or *in the place of* their reſidence: Nor do we thinke our *Brethren* will contend for it, if they be ſtill of opinion, that the *Impoſition of hands* on *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Acts 13.3. was an *Ordination*: for, neither was *that Antioch* the *place*, nor *thoſe then preſent* the *people*, to which they were then ſent forth: And our *Brethren* adde here, *they commended them to the grace of God as* Paul *did the Church of* Epheſus, Acts 20. 32. Yet was not *Paul* then at *Epheſus*, but at *Miletus*; nor was the *whole Church* of *Epheſus* there preſent, but *only the Elders* of *Epheſus*, and perhaps *ſome Brethren* accompanying them.

But, if our *Brethren* would rather ſuppoſe, That κατ' ἐκκλησίαν in *Acts* 14. 23. doth denote not ſo much *the diſtinction of Charges to which*, as the *difference of places in which* they were ordained, and That theſe Elders were not ordained *all* at *one time* and *place*, but that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did firſt in *one* Church ordaine Elders *to them* and *commended them* to the grace of God; and then, in a *ſecond*, ordaine Elders *for them*, commending *them* to the grace of God; and ſo of the reſt: and, if, upon this ſuppoſition, they will aske, Why thoſe Elders ordained for the *firſt*, did not *aſſiſt* in ordaining Elders for a *ſecond Church*; and, the Elders of both theſe, aſſiſt in ordaining others for a *third*, and *fourth* Church, & ſo of the reſt? We ſay, That our *Brethren* have not yet ſhewed but *that they did ſo*, and none of their three reaſons, which they produced to make good the firſt part of their *minor*, will prove the contrary.

But, ſay they, *the Apoſtles mention not Aſſociation*. Anſw. True; nor do the *Apoſtles* Mention that which is mentioned; for, *Luke* was the Writer of this Hiſtory, not the *Apoſtles*; They are but part of the Hiſtory. And 2. ſuppoſe it were not mentioned at all in this place; There be many things that *the Apoſtles do not mention*, (either here or any where elſe) which yet our *Brethren* would faine have allowed in their way. The Apoſtles do not mention (no more doth *Luke*) That *each of theſe ſingle Congregations did aſſume all and ſole power in Ordination*; yet our *Brethren*, it ſeemes, thinke they did: The Apoſtles do not mention, That *the people without the Elders may ordaine an Elder*; or, That *the people may joyne with the Elders in impoſition of hands*; yet perhaps ſome of our *Brethren*, if not all of them, thinke it may be done: The Apoſtles do not mention *Non-Communion of Churches*: Nor a *Church Covenant*: Nor *ſuch elective Synods*, as our *Brethren* contend for (beſide many other that might be mentioned:) But our *Brethren* will not thence infer,

That therefore these things either *were not*, or, *ought not to be*; *because the Apostles*, without mentioning of these, *commended them to the grace of God, as having sufficient meanes to perpetuate succession, and to ordaine other Elders, if any should die, as also to build them up unto eternall life.*

But, say our Brethren, *this they would have done* (*viz.* mentioned Association) *if this had been the way*; *for, when they did things with ordinary Elders, it is thus recorded, The Apostles and Elders.*

Answ. Sometimes it is so recorded, but not *alwayes*. In 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Paul only* is mentioned to have imposed hands on *Timothy*; and yet our *Brethren* thinke, from 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. that the *Eldership* joyned with *Paul* in it. And, why may not *Paul* and *Barnabas* as well be said here to *ordaine Elders for each Church* (without mentioning others) though others also, in some Churches, might joyne in the action? Especially considering that, in the *first* of these Churches, there could not be a *conjunction of other Elders*, because, *as yet*, no other were ordained: And therefore, though the *Elders first ordained* might afterward joyn in ordaining Elders for *other* Churches; yet, it could not be said, even upon that supposition, That *Paul and Barnabas with the Elders of neighbour Churches*, did ordain Elders for *each* Church; because, in the *first* Church at least, *Paul* and *Barnabas* must be supposed to ordaine *alone*, and not in conjunction with other Elders of neighbour Churches: but, That *Paul and Barnabas did ordaine Elders*, for *each* Church, might well be said; though, in *some* Churches, other Elders joyned with them.

Againe, it may be very probably conceived, That not only *Paul* and a *Presbytery of ordinary Elders* joyned in this ordination of *Timothy*; but, that *Barnabas*, or *Silas*, or some other joyned likewise; though neither the first, nor the second Epistle to *Timothy* (nor any other place) do expressely mention it. The first time that we find *Timothy* mentioned, is *Acts* 16. when *Paul* and *Silas* comming to *Derbe*, and *Lystra*, found *Timothy* there: but, how long he had been there before this time, we cannot tell. Perhaps he might be one of those whom *Paul* and *Barnabas* ordained *Acts* 14. 23. and he continued *there an Elder*, till *Pauls* next comming: And, if so; then have we not only *Barnabas* joyned with *Paul* in this ordination, but also the thing that our *Brethren* enquire after, viz. *Elders associated* with *Paul* and *Barnabas* in ordaining Elders at least to some of these Churches. Or, if *Timothy* were not at *that time* ordained by *Paul*, it is likely, that at his *next coming* to *Derbe* and *Lystra*, *Chap.* 16. finding *Timothy* there, resolving to take him as a companion of his journey, he would ordaine him; and whom can we then suppose to be the *Eldership* then joyning with him, but those of *Derbe*, *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, (of whom expresse mention is made *Acts* 16. 1.) and, probably

bably, thoſe of *Antioch* too. So, that, at leaſt by this time, we may find theſe Elders aſſociated, if not with *Paul and Barnabas*, yet with *Paul and Silas*, which is all one: For, why *Silas* (who was a *Prophet* as appears *Acts* 15. 32.) ſhould not be thought to joyne with *Paul*, in *Timothies* ordination, as well as the *ordinary Elders* of thoſe places, we ſee no reaſon; and yet we find not him *expreſſely mentioned* as joyning therein, though we cannot thinke that he was excluded. Or, if *Timothy* were *not yet* ordained by *Paul*, but at ſome time after, (though we ſee no reaſon to thinke that his ordination was longer deferred) yet when ever it was, it is probable, that *Silas* or ſome other of like quality accompanying *Paul* in his travailes, (who did not uſually travail without ſome ſuch companion,) did joyne with him in the ordination of *Timothy*. So that in a matter of Fact, of this nature, it is no good argument to conclude *negatively*, becauſe the hiſtory doth not in every place, *make mention* of it.

And thus we have anſwered the *Arguments*, produced by our *Brethren* as the *Reaſons* of their *Diſſent* from this Propoſition. But, whereas the Aſſembly had, to their *Propoſition*, annexed this *Proof*, viz.

1. "*Becauſe, There is no Example in Scripture that any ſingle Congrega-*
"*tion which might conveniently aſſociate did aſſume to it ſelfe all and ſole*
"*power in Ordination*; *neither is there any Rule which may warrant ſuch*
"*a practiſe.*

2. "*Becauſe There is in Scripture, Example of an Ordination in a Preſ-*
"*bytery over divers Congregations*; *as in the Church of* Jeruſalem, *where*
"*were many Congregations, theſe many Congregations were under one Preſ-*
"*bytery, and this Preſbytery did Ordaine.*

Our *Brethren* are pleaſed to take no notice of this proof at all, nor do they alledge any thing againſt the ſtrength of it. But for what reaſons they choſe rather to wave it, then to object againſt it, themſelves beſt know.

Concordat cum Originali.

Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

In the diſſenting Brethrens Reaſons.

PAg. 1. lin. 8. read, *one.* p 2. l 18. r *relation.* p 7. l 29. r *diſtinguiſh.* p 10. l 2. dele *if* l 30. r *related.* p 11. l 29. r *ſimilarly.* p 16. l 4. r ἀνθρώπων. l 23. r ἧς ἐγὼ κατοικῶ l 33. r πατρὸς ἐθνους. p 20. l 10. r μύστον. p 22. l 18. r *underſtood.* p 24. l 20. r *ſo.* p 38. l 22. r *adminiſtration.* p 39 l 13. r *Parochial.* p 40. l 10. r *Presbyters.*

In the Aſſemblies Anſwer.

Pag. 6. lin. 18. read, *one particular firſt.* p 13. l 37. r 1 *Tim.* 5. 17, 18. p 16. l 2. r *accept.* p 21. l 9. r παυδηται. p 22. l 17, 18, 19, 20. point thus, *ſome acts: as for chooſing Officers, ſo their firſt inſtance and their fifth; for making Decrees, ſo the ſixth; for hearing, ſo the ſecond and third;* p 35. l 6. r τὸσσα μυειάδες. l 23. & 26. r μυειάδες. l 35. r μυεῖον πᾶσος. *in the margine* r ἀργεῖα. p 52. l ult. r *imitated.* p 68. l 29. r *only.* l 30. r *if they be able, we.* p 71. l 38. r προσβύτερα. p 82. l 25. r *Arts.* p 91. l 32. r διαλεγόμενος. p 94. l 6. r *the Franke, according to Beza, but.* l 16. r *whereas as we.* l 30 r *there.* p. 95. l 11. r 50000. l 14. r *Hebræum.* p 97. marg. r 97. and ſo in order to 105. p 98. l 37. r *uher arguments, there then.* p 99. l 21. r *Chronologie.* p 100. l 24. r *ALL.*

In the diſſenting Brethrens Reaſons againſt the Subordination, &c.

Pag. 123. in the title r *Synods.* l 7. r *which makes.* p 124. l 37. r *muſt be.* p 130. l 35. dele *the.* p 131. Title r *Synods.*

In the Aſſemblies Anſwer.

Pag. 137. l 4. r *for Government.* p 140. l 32. r *them.* l 31. r *reckoned after Apoſtles.* l ult. r *iv.* p 142. l 1. r *nations.* p 144. l 7, 11. dele *the Interrogative points.* p. 149. l 18. r *as well as.* p 154. l 18 r *nothing.* p 161. l 5. dele *be.* p 182. l 37 r *them.* p 183. l 18. r *he.* p 185 l 31. r *all power of.* p 186. title r *the Anſwer of the Aſſembly of Divines.* l 12. r *an.*

In the diſſenting Brethrens Reaſons againſt Ordination.

Pag. 191. l 27. and 29. r *met.* p. 192. l 7. r ἐκκλησίας.

In the Aſſemblies Anſwer.

Pag. 185. read, 195. and ſo anſwerably in the reſt that follow. p 203. l 33. r *ſo.*

In the papers of Accommodation.

Pag. 18. l 6. r *purſued.* p 19. l. 4. dele *to.* p 22. l 2. r *partake.* l 19. r *Claſſis.* p 28. l 13, 14. r *with in any thing.* p 30. & 31. r 30. 31. p 39. l 8. r *good.* p 46. l 6. r *with.* l 10. r *have found, the.* l 21. r *doth not onely lay.* p 47. l 15. r *neceſſity to recede.* p 50. l 20. r *the.* p 55. r 53. p 54. l 15. dele *the Interrogative point.* p 55. l 5. r *our miniſters, in their.* p 57. l 29 r *exclude them; and.* p 71. l ult. r *from us: the ſame.* p 82. l 19. r *Tutor.* p 87. l 17. r *Claſſes.* p 89. title, dele *of.* p 90. l 19. r *Chatechiſme.* p 96. l ult. r *ſaid.* p 102. l 20. r *argument.* p 107. l 16. r *it.* p 116, 117. *tranſpoſe the Titles.*

PAPERS

Given in to the

HONORABLE COMMITTEE

OF

LORDS and COMMONS

And Assembly of *Divines* with the Commissioners of *Scotland*,

FOR

ACCOMMODATION.

1644.

By a SUB-COMMITTEE of *Divines* of the Assembly and *Dissenting Brethren.*

4 2

London, Printed *Anno Dom.* 1648.

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London, Printed Anno Dom. 1648.

An Order of the Houſe of Commons for A Committee of Accommodation.

Septemb. 13. 1644.

THat the *Committee of Lords and Commons appointed to treat with the Commiſſioners of* Scotland, *and the Committee of the Aſſembly, Do take into conſideration the differences of the opinions of the members of the Aſſembly in point of Church-government, and to indeavour an* union *if it be poſſible: And in caſe that cannot be done, to indeavour the* finding out ſome way how far tender conſciences, *who cannot in all things ſubmit to the ſame Rule, which ſhall be eſtabliſhed, may be borne with according to the Word, and as may ſtand with the publike peace; That ſo the proceedings of the Aſſembly may not be ſo much retarded.*

This honourable Committee met according to the Order, *Septemb.* 20. following

THe appointment of the Order Being, *That the differences of opinions*, of the *members of the Assembly, in point of Church Government be taken into consideration.* The honourable *Committee* appointed a SUB-COMMITTEE of *six* of the Members of the Assembly. Mr. *Marshall*, Mr. *Hearle*, Master *Vines*, Dr. *Temple*, Mr. *Goodwin*, and Mr. *Nye*, (two of the dissenting brethren) To consider of *the differences of opinions in the Assembly, in point of Church-Government*: And to bring in what might be matter for that grand *Committee* to consider of.

In pursuance of this, the said *sub-Committee* met, who stiled themselves the *sub-Committee of* AGREEMENTS. And after the Preface declaring their mutuall confidence to *agree in one Confession of Faith*, and in *One Directory of publique worship*, &c. They prepared severall Propositions, concerning the Government of *particular Congregations*, and Ordination, &c. Declaring how farre in practicall principles they did agree therein, together with the different practices, which each according to their principles, desired.

October 11. 1644. The honourable *Committee* met againe, At which the *sub-Committee* presented the Propositions they had prepared, declaring they had further to bring in concerning *Classes* and *Synods*. And *what* might be the *way* of accommodation for the *dissenting brethren to enjoy Congregations amongst us*, according to their principles. All which (though they had met many dayes) was not as then perfected.

Therefore the honourable *Committee* did remit back to the said *sub-Committee* the Propositions then brought in, to be further explained, and as much, as might to be perfected against

gainſt the next meeting, adjourning *that Committee* untill *Tueſday October* 15.

When theſe *Propoſitions* that follow, were brought in by the *ſub-Committee*, as containing both a fuller explication, and the beſt way to accommodate their own and their *brethrens* principles in a practique way (which was the end of that honourable *Committee*) both for *Congregations*, and *Synods*, and the government thereof.

October 15. 1644. The honourable Committee of *Lords*, *Commons*, *Divines* of the *Aſſembly*, with the *Scotch-Commiſſioners* met. And theſe Propoſitions were read by Maſter *Vines* who was the *Chaire-man* of that *ſub-Committee*.

A Vote was paſt in the *Committee* to take them into conſideration. But that debate was not entred upon, becauſe it was the earneſt deſire of ſome that the *Rule* ſhould firſt be made compleate by the Aſſembly and the Houſes.

And there was a *Ceſſation* put upon the *honourable Committee* herein, by the honourable Houſe of Commons untill their further pleaſure.

Let the Reader take notice, *that in what particulars the* diſſenting brethren *do differ from the Propoſitions of the reſt of the* SUB-COMMITTEE, *or do expreſſe their deſires a part from them, there is a differing Character put in the Printing of them for the diſcerning thereof, and that in other things wherein they expreſſe not any* difference *or further* explanation, *they* agreed *to them.*

The PROPOSITIONS were as followeth.

At the *Sub-Committee of Agreements.*

IN confidence that we ſhall jointly agree in one Confeſſion of Faith, and in one Directory of the Publick worſhip of God, with the help of a Preface, we come according to our order to points of Government, and therein do agree as followeth.

1. That a particular congregation having ſuch officers as the word of God holds out, both for preaching and governing, is a Church that hath power in all Eccleſiaſticall affairs, which do only concern it ſelfe.

2. That theſe forementioned officers are to be ſo many in number, in every ſuch congregation, as that three or two at the leaſt may agree together in every act of government. By two at the leaſt we mean preaching or governing officers. But ſome of the Committee do hold that a preaching Presbyter ſhould concurre in the ſentence of excommunication and ſuſpenſion.

3. That theſe officers have power in thoſe things which are voted by the Aſſembly to be due unto them, and in ſuſpenſion and excommunication: Some of the Committee meaning that the major part of the officers have power to do it, the congregation not oppoſing it, in which caſe of oppoſition they hold fit that the officers do ſuſpend the act. *Others of the Committee ſaying that the Major part of the Officers have power to do it, if the Major part of the Brethren do conſent unto it by their Votes: ſo as the negative lies in the major part, either of the Officers or Brethren.*

And as for *Ordination*, we all hold, that where there are two preaching Presbyters at leaſt, ſuch a Presbytery may

may ordaine their own Elders. *But some of the Committee do further so, that where there are two ruling Elders at least, they have power of ordaining Elders for that congregation, and in case there be no Elders* (*as at the first* in Ecclesia constituenda) *then the choice of Elders, by the people, with approbation of the neighbouring Ministers with fasting and prayer, may suffice.*

4. That the Elders of the congregation shall advise with the Classis in all cases of Excommunication before they proceed to it, and the Classis hath power to heare and determine: yet so, as the power of the Congregation be not concluded thereby in matter of Excommunication. *But some of the Committee do say that in whatsoever case they find difficult either in excommunication or in any other administration of their power, they shall first advise with some company or Classis of neighbour Ministers, as at the end of the foure following Propositions afterwards.*

5. For the *associating of Churches*, let there be in every County of this Kingdome, a certain number of select, godly and able Ministers of the word, within that County, to heare and determine the causes and differences in every congregation within the same, and let there be a certain number of select Church-governours assistant unto them: the first choyce of these to be made by the Parliament in such a way as they shall determine, and such number to have power of election from time to time of any Minister or Church-governour into any place among them, that is void by death or otherwise.

6. The Ministers and Ruling-governors, of every congregation within that County so associated, shall have power to debate and vote in that meeting from time to time in such cases as pertain to that particular congregation, except such of them as are complained of, or are parties in question.

7. A certain number of the aforesaid Ministers, and

Ruling-governours as do dwell near together, in the same Deanery or division of that County, and who may with conveniency more frequently meet together, shall have power to heare and determine the causes and differences within the severall congregations of that precinct.

8. Let Nationall Assemblies of Ministers and others, be chosen from time to time, according as shal be appointed by the Parliament, as the necessity of the Churches affairs shall require.

To the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth, the whole Committee doth assent; *onely some of them doe desire that the effect of that which hereafter followeth may for explanation sake be inserted.* viz. *That the Elders and Brethren of each Congregation in case they find any thing too hard for themselves or have any controversie among themselves, may have liberty to advise with any of those select Elders, and others in the Province jointly or apart, or with the Elders of any other Churches, for the determining and composing the controversie or resolving of that difficulty, and in case they cannot be satisfied, them to have recourse also to the advice and help of that Classis unto which they appertain, to solve and determine it.*

9 That the members of particular congregations do cohabit and live together within certain bounds and precincts of a parish under preaching and governing Officers: *unto which so far as it concerns the meer bounding of congregations some of the Committee do desire that these provisions may be added.*

1. *That they may have liberty to dwell in another Parish if the consent of the Minister of that other parish be procured.*

2. *For Country villages that the limits be extended to take in from some one parish immediately adjoyning.*

We having weighed our Brethrens Principles, do find no probability of accommodation for them, ordinarily to enjoy congregations, unlesse when it shall happen in a parish that

that the Minister cannot administer the Sacraments to all in the Parish, whom possibly the neighbour Ministers or the Classis may judge fit to be admitted; such persons shall have power to procure to themselves the Sacraments, either by the help of a neighbour Minister, or some other provision be made by a proportionable allowance out of the Tythes of the parish according to the wisedome of the State.

Whereunto our *Brethren* adde as followeth.

Or otherwise if in a parish it happen that there be a considerable number of such as cannot partake in the ordinances with the Minister and people there, they shall have liberty to dispose of themselves in a distinct Church, and to choose a Minister or Ministers at their own charge to be maintained, to be their Pastor.

If such a liberty shall seem in the wisedome of this honourable Committee to be prejudiciall to the peace of the Church, as not to be permitted, we humbly desire the doctrinall principles *wherein we differ about Church-government may be taken into serious consideration, and some other way of accommodation in practice thought upon, as shall seem fit to this honourable Committee.*

Concerning Classes and Synods.

1. At these meetings, let them pray, expound scripture, resolve difficult cases of conscience and preach the word.

2. They may dogmatically declare what the will of Christ is in such cases as are before them; And this judgment of theirs ought to be received with reverence, and obligation,

as

as from an ordinance of Christ. *Some of the Brethren (though assenting) yet are bold to adde hereunto; that the judgment of any other, of those Elders in the province, or elsewhere, advised with, they doe in like manner looke at as the ordinance of Christ, and to have the like obligation in them.*

3. If the doctrine or practise of any particular congregation be erroneous, hurtfull or destructive to holinesse or the peace of that or other congregations, they are bound to give account thereof to the Classis or Synod. *Some of the Brethren adde to this, That the ground of this obligation to give account to the Classis or Synod is their being offended, or their Churches scandalized thereat.*

4. The Classis or Synod may examine, admonish, and in case of obstinacy declare against that congregation or any particular member in it, as the nature and degree of that offence shall require. *Some of the Brethren assent to such proceedings as towards a Church offending and scandalizing of them: but adde, That no such examination, admonition in any Classis or Assembly be extended to any particular person in that Church, but unto the Church it selfe, for not putting forth the power that Christ hath given them for reforming him.*

5. The Classis or Synod may judge touching any person who deserves excommunication, and may charge the severall congregationall Presbyteries whom it concernes to do it.

6. We conceive that in case the particular Eldership refuse to doe their duty, the Classis, may and ought not onely to withdraw communion from them, but also when need is, exercise the sentence of excommunication themselves. *Instead of this sixth Proposition, some of the Brethren do insert this, In case the aforesaid particular Churches and Elderships offending shall refuse to submit to this course, that then the Classis or Synod are to acquaint their congregations respectively, and so withdraw from them, denying Church-Communion and fellowship with them.*

7. In case of appeale if it appeare to the Classis that the sentence

ſentence was unjuſt, they may judge that the particular Presbytery ought to reverſe it: and in caſe they obſtinately refuſe to do it, the Claſſis may reverſe it. *Others of the Brethren only ſay that they are to proceed as in the former Article.*

8. The Claſſis or Synod have power to ordaine Miniſters for ſuch congregations as have not a ſufficient presbytery in them, and let all congregations aſſociated, firſt adviſe with the Claſſis, and take their aſſiſtance before they ordain a Miniſter. *Some of the Brethren do referre themſelves for this, to the laſt clauſe in the third Propoſition delivered in.*

THE PAPERS AND Answers OF THE *DISSENTING BRETHREN* AND The COMMITTEE of the Assembly of DIVINES.

Given in to the Honorable COMMITTEE of Lords and Commons, and Assembly of *Divines* with the Scotch Commissioners,

FOR ACCOMMODATION,

At the REVIVING of that Committee.

1645.

London, Printed *Anno Dom.* 1648.

The Order of the Lords and Commons for the *Reviving* of the Committee for ACCOMMODATION.

Die Jovis 6. Novemb. 1645.

ORdered by the Lords and Commons in Parliament Assembled, that the Committee of Lords and Commons appointed to treat with the Commissioners of Scotland, and the Committee of the Assembly, Do take into consideration the differences in opinions of the members of the Assembly in point of Church-government, and to indeavour an union if it be possible: And in case that cannot be done, to indeavour the finding out some way how farre tender consciences, who cannot in all things submit to the Common Rule, which shall be established, may be borne with according to the Word, and as may stand with the publike peace; That so the proceedings of the Assembly may not be so much retarded.

The Lords Committees.

Earle of *Northumberland*, Earle of *Manchester*, Lord Vicount *Say* and *Seale*, Lord *Wharton*, Lord *Howard*.

Novemb.

Novemb. 14. 1645.

Ordered that the ſaid Lords Committees, are to meet with a Committee of the Houſe of Commons, on Munday next at three of the clock in the afternoon in Jeruſalem *chamber in the Colledge of* Weſtminſter, *and that the Committee of the Aſſembly be there preſent.*

John Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.

The Members of the Aſſembly who were a Committee for to meet with the Committee of the Lords and Commons appointed to treat with the Commiſſioners from the Church of *Scotland*, are as followeth.

Maſter *Marſhall*, Doctor *Burges*, Maſter *White*, Doctor *Hoyle*, Doctor *Temple*, Doctor *Smith*, Maſter *Palmer*, Maſter *Seaman*, Maſter *Herle*, Maſter *Goodwin*, Maſter *Nye*, Maſter *Bridge*, Maſter *Hill*, Maſter *Reynolds*, Maſter *Arrowſmith*, Maſter *Young*, Maſter *Vines*, Maſter *Tuckney*, Maſter *Newcomen*, Maſter *Simpſon*, Maſter *Burroughs*, Maſter *Dury*.

On the 17. of *November*, 1645. the Committees above mentioned, met in *Jeruſalem* chamber, and did then order that thoſe *Divines* of the Aſſembly, members of this Committee, who had formerly been a *ſub-Committee* for this purpoſe ſhould conſider and prepare matter for the debate of this Committee at their next meeting,

which

which meeting was then appointed to be Munday the 24 of the ſame moneth.

Novemb. 24. 1645. The Committee met again, and the chair-man of the Sub-committee, declared that they had not prepared matter for their debate, according to their order, becauſe the Diſſenting Brethren, did wave the firſt part of the Order of the Houſes touching accommodation, which though the reſt of the Sub-committee could not aſſent unto, yet they left it to the Diſſenting Brethren, if they pleaſed to preſent their thoughts to this Committee, not as the reſult of the Sub-committee, but as their own, and accordingly the Diſſenting Brethren did preſent a paper which is as followeth.

Novemb. 24. 1645.

The nature of the buſineſſe puts us upon the ſecond part of the Ordinance of Parliament. "*The indeavou-*
"*ring to find out ſome way how farre tender conſcien-*
"*ces, who cannot in all things ſubmit to the Rule*
"*which ſhall be eſtabliſhed may be born with, accor-*
"*ding to the Word, and as may ſtand with the pub-*
"*like peace, that ſo the proceedings of the Aſſembly may not be ſo much retarded; which we humbly preſent to the conſideration of this Committee.*

After ſome debate upon this paper it was Reſolved upon the Queſtion, that Maſter *Goodwin*,

Goodwin, Maſter *Nye*, Maſter *Sympſon*, Maſter *Bridge*, and Maſter *Burroughs*, do bring in unto this Committee upon thurſday ſeven-night, wherein they deſire to be born with in point of Church-government, in all thoſe things wherein they cannot ſubmit unto the common Rule that is eſtabliſhed.

December 4. 1645. The Committee met again, and the *Diſſenting Brethren* preſented their deſires in a paper, as followeth.

Decemb. 4. 1645.

Agreeing in thoſe things that containe the ſubſtance of the ſervice and worſhip of God in the Directory according to the Preface; and being confident that we ſhall agree in the confeſſion of faith, *for as much as we doe agree with the Reformed Churches in the doctrine contained in their Confeſſions and writings as our Brethren doe, who differ from us in matter of diſcipline.*

We humbly crave,

1. In relation to the Ordinance for giving power to Claſſical Presbyteries to ordaine Miniſters, Novemb. 10. 1645.

That where there is a Presbytery, (that is, two Elders at leaſt) in any of our Congregations, there may be power of Ordination: and where there is not a Presbytery, thoſe who are ſufficiently qualified and ap-

approved for their gifts and graces by godly able Ministers, being chosen by the people, and set apart for the Ministry, with prayer and fasting in the Congregation, may primâ vice *exercise their Ministry.*

2. In relation to the Ordinance for the setling of the Presbyterial Government. *Aug* 19. 1645.

1. *That our Congregations may not be brought under the Government of Classicall, Provinciall, or Nationall Assemblies, in respect of Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction; but may be permitted to enjoy liberty as some priviledged and exempt places, formerly have been permitted to enjoy, in respect of the Ecclesiasticall Discipline, then exercised.*

2. *That our Congregations may have liberty to constitute their own Elder-ships, having a competent number of persons fitly qualified for Elders: and that all men who communicate in the Lords Supper, may have liberty to choose their own officers.*

3. *That we may not be forced to communicate as members in those Parishes where we dwell; but may have liberty to have Congregations of such persons, who give good testimony of their Godlinesse and peaceablenesse, yet out of tendernesse of conscience cannot communicate in their Parishes, but do voluntarily offer themselves to joine in such congregations. Which, how it may best stand with the peace of the Kingdome,*

we

we humbly leave to the conſideration of this honourable Committee.

That all ſuch congregations as are made up of ſuch as do voluntarily joine themſelvs, having an Elderſhip which themſelves have choſen or accepted of, and ſubmitted to, may have power of all Church-cenſures, and of the Adminiſtration of all Ordinances within themſelves. Yet ſo as they ſubmit to give an account of any of their proceedings, to whom the Parliament ſhall appoint.

This Paper being read and the day ſpent in explayning it,

It was ordered, that the reſt of the Divines, members of the Committee be made a Sub-committee to conſider of the Paper of the Diſſenting Brethren, given in, and to meet firſt betweene themſelves, then with the Diſſenting Brethren, and to prepare ſomewhat againſt the next meeting of this Committee which was reſolved to be on Munday ſevenight *Decemb.* 15. The Commiſſioners of the Church of *Scotland* were deſired to aſſiſt the Sub-committee.

Decem. 15. 1645.

The honourable Committee met againe. And the *Sub-Committee* preſented an anſwer to the Diſſenting Brethrens Paper, which is as followeth.

Although it would have been a far more comfortable and happy way, and more agreeable to the peace and edification of the Church, and a meanes to prevent the danger of Schisme and many other mischeifs, & which we have always much rather desired to have perfaced, the method appointed by the Honourable Houses, And in the first place to have indeavoured an Accommodation: yet our Brethern professing that an Accommodation was now impossible, and that the nature and present state of the businesse doth lead them to desire a forbearance (in both which we yet humbly conceive they are mistaken) upon serious consideration had of their Paper to that purpose, we have found it needfull to premise these three particulars.

1. That what ever forbearance we shall agree upon, we take it for granted upon our Brethrens Preface, that the same Directory for worship, & the same Confession of Faith, shall be imposed upon them in the same manner, as it is imposed upon us.

2. And therefore whosoever agrees not in those things that containe the substance of the service and worship of God in the Directory, according to the Preface; and shall not agree in the Confessions of Faith, nor with the doctrine of the reformed Churches, contained in their confessions and writings, as we do, who differ from

these

these Brethren in matters of Discipline, shall not have the benefit of this indulgence.

3. If any shall practice any thing contrary to the Directory, or write, publish, or declare any doctrine contrary to the Confession of faith, he shall be liable to the same penalties, that we our selves are for the like offence.

Which things being premised, we have found it needfull and most consonant to the businesse, to take first into consideration, *the third Proposition* of our Brethrens particular desires under the Head of Presbytery, unto which all the rest have so necessary a relation, which they have offered to this Honourable Committee.

Concerning which we humbly conceive.

1. That this desire of our Brethren is not to be granted to them *in terminis*, for the reasons which we have already humbly offered.

2. Because it holds out a plain and totall separation from the Rule, as in nothing it were to be complyed with, nor our Churches to be communicated with in any thing, which should argue Church Communion, a more neer tye then is fit to be held forth against false Churches.

3. It plainly holds out the unlawfulnesse of gathering Churches out of true Churches, yea out

out of such true Churches which are endeavouring further to reforme according to the word of God: whereof we are assured there is not the least hint of an example in all the Book of God.

3. In granting this, the Parliament should grant liberty to destroy and pull down what themselves are endeavouring to set up.

4. The indulgence they seek is a greater priviledge then they shall enjoy who shall be under the Rule, as may appeare in severall particulars. 1. Such as own the Rule, must live in the same Parish with the other members of their Church. These may live any where, and be of any Church they please, yea though a Church of their own way, were in the place where they live. 2. If such as live under the Rule would better themselves in living under the Pastorall charge of another Minister, they must remove their dwelling; These need not.

5. This would give countenance to a perpetuall Schisme and division in the Church, still drawing away some from the Churches under the Rule, which also would breed many irritations between the parties going away and those whom they leave; And againe, between the Church that should be forsaken,

forsaken, and that to which they should go.

6. This would introduce *all manner of confusion*, in families where the members were of severall Churches; and exceedingly, if not altogether hinder the mutuall edification that might be afforded and received amongst them. And especially in gteat families, it would be impossible for the Governours to have a sure account of all their families attending upon the Ordinances, when twenty of them may possibly be of twenty severall Churches; and much lesse take account of their profiting by the Ordinances.

II. That none are to be allowed upon differences only in matter of Government, to withdraw communion from us in things wherein they declare an agreement: But seeing it is confessed in Worship and Doctrine, we are one, and have covenanted to endeavour the neerest conjunction and uniformity, there may be no such indulgence granted to any as may constitute them in distinct separated congregations, as to these Parts of worship where they can joyn in communion with us, but only some expedient may be indeavoured how to beare with them in the particulars wherein they cannot agree with us.

III. For this purpose we humbly offer.

1. That such as through scruple or error of conscience, cannot joine to partake of the Lords Supper, shall repaire to the Minister and Elders for satisfaction in their scruples, which if they cannot receive, they shall not be compelled to communicate in the Lords Supper, provided that in all other parts of worship, they Join with the congregation wherein they live, and be under the government of that congregation.

2. That such as in this manner are under the Government of that congregation wherein they live, and are not Officers therein, being of the Independent judgement, shall seek satisfaction as in the former Proposition, which if they cannot receive they shall not be compelled to be under the power of censures from Classis or Synods, provided that they continue under the government of that congregation, and that no man who hath submitted to Classis and Synods shall decline them, in any case *pendente lite*.

These Papers of the *Sub-Committee*, in Answer to the dissenting Brethrens Papers, being thrice read after sundry Debates, it was voted,

1. That the Brethren shall have a coppy of the Papers in Answer to theirs communicated to them.

2. That they are to returne an Answer in writing

ting to this Committee, by Tuesday sevenight.

December 23. 1645.

The Honourable Committee met againe, and the dissenting Brethren presented an Answer in writing, which was read: first reading a Paragraph of the *Sub-Committees Paper*, and then a Paragraph of their Answer, in manner as followes.

An Answer to a Paper brought into this Honorable Committee by a Sub-committee of the Divines of the Assembly.

Decemb. 23. 1645.

As to the Preface.

"ALthough it would have beene a far more comfortable and happy way, and more agreeable to the "peace and edification of the Church, and a meanes to "prevent the danger of Schisme and many other mischiefs; "and which we have alwayes much rather desired to have "pursued the Method appointed by the honourable Houses; and in the first place to have endeavoured an Accommodation: yet our Brethren professing that an Accommodation was now impossible, and that the nature "and present state of the businesse doth lead them to desire "a forbearance (in both which we yet humbly conceive "they are mistaken) upon serious consideration had of "their Paper to that purpose, we have found it needfull to "premise these three particulars.

Answ.

Anſwer.

As Accommodation *would have been more advantagious and ſafe for us, becauſe it would have ſet us in the* ſame ſtate *with our Brethren, ſo we have earneſtly purſued it, and according to the* Method *appointed by the honorable Houſes, we did in the* firſt place *endeavour an* Accommodation, *and in a* SUBCOMMITTEE *made a great progreſſe therein, which was preſented to this honorable Committee* 12 months *ſince; but the* impediment *to it was, the inſiſting on by our Brethren,* that the Rule muſt firſt be reſolved upon; *But* now *that the* Rule *is reſolved on by the Aſſembly, and* eſtabliſhed *by the Parliament (we having according to our conſciences entred our* Diſſent *unto, and given in* Reaſons *to the Aſſembly againſt it) we cannot go on in the way of* Accommodation *according to the* former *Method; Becauſe* Accommodation is an agreement in one common Rule, *and we doe not preſume to ſeeke a* new *Rule to be made.*

That impoſſibility *of Accommodation which was ſpoken of, was, then, withall* explained *to be only in reſpect of the* Rule, as now it is eſtabliſhed: *For otherwiſe as touching the nature of the thing* ſimply conſidered *without a ſuppoſition of* ſuch *a* Rule, *either* Voted *by the Aſſembly, or* eſtabliſhed *by the honorable Houſes, we have from the beginning profeſſed* that we thought we and our Brethren did agree in common principles enough, and ſufficient to have preſerved

ſerved the Churches and Saints in theſe Kingdoms in peace. *And when the* honorable Houſes *renewed this Order, they having* not ſeen *(as we humbly conceive) the* difference *of our judgements in point of* ſub-ordination of Aſſemblies, *and our* Reaſons *againſt them, they might think, that we might* accommodate *with the Rule they have ſet forth.*

Neither will ſuch a forbearance *as we ſeek, endanger* Schiſme. *Becauſe there may be a variation, in a greater latitude from a government, that is eſtabliſhed on a* Divine right, *much more from one which is* not *eſtabliſhed upon* JusDivinum: *when the government it ſelf hath its authority but* from the State, *a* forbearance *from it,* by the State, *with laws to prevent contention, cannot be* Schiſme, *or any way endanger it; the nature of* Schiſme *(according to the Scriptures) conſiſting in* an open breach of Chriſtian love, *and not in every* diverſity of opinion *or* practiſe. *Yea, as both others, and we alſo have found, the great* cauſe *of* Schiſme, *hath been a* ſtrict obligation *of all to an* uniformity, beyond *that of the Apoſtle.* That ſo far as we have attained wee ſhould walke by the ſame rule, and if any be otherwiſe minded God will reveale it in his time.

To the three firſt Premiſes.

1. "That what ever forbearance we ſhall agree upon, we "take it for granted upon our Brethrens Preface, that the "ſame Directory for worſhip, and the ſame Confeſſion of

"Faith, ſhall be impoſed upon them, in the ſame manner, as it "is impoſed upon us.

2. "And therfore whoſoever agrees not in thoſe things, that "contain the ſubſtance of the ſervice and worſhip of God in "the Directory, according to the Preface; and ſhall not agree "in the Confeſſion of Faith, nor with the Doctrine of the re-"formed Churches, contained in their confeſſions and writ-"ings, as we do, who differ from theſe Brethren in matters "of Diſcipline, ſhall not have the benefit of this indulgence.

3. "If any ſhall practiſe any thing contrary to the Directo-"ry, or write, publiſh, or declare any Doctrine contrary to "the Confeſſion of Faith, he ſhall be liable to the ſame penal-"ties, that we our ſelves are for the like offence.

Anſwer.

In general we only ſay, affirmatively: that thoſe who do agree *in theſe things that contain the ſubſtance ſervice, & worſhip of God in the Directory according to the Preface; and in the confeſſion of faith with Reformed Churches in the Doctrine contained in their confeſſions and writings* (*as we and our Brethern do, who differ from us in matter of Church-government*) may lawfully be tollerated according to the word of God in ſuch things as we deſire: *But we meddle* not *with the* Negative: *or* Impoſitions, *or to ſet the* bounds *and* limits *of* forbearance *unto all tender conſciences. Yea, before, we brought in this Paper, we not knowing, but that the honorable Houſes might intend a conſideration of* the generall Rules how farre tender conſciences might be forborn according to the word of God, and as might ſtand with the peace of

to

this Kingdome, *Profeſſed that we preſumed not to limit it to our judgements, nor would bring in any other* Report *than about the generall Rules of Toleration, unleſſe the honorable Committee did* determine *and* limit *us, which accordingly was done; It being alſo declared, that they were ſure, that* we *were intended and the matters of difference in point of Church-government betweene us and our Brethren in the Aſſembly:* yet *we, to wipe off ſuch* aſperſions, *prejudices, and ſuſpicions as were upon us, and to make a* full *and* candid Declaration *of our judgements and agreements in point of* Doctrine *and the* ſubſtance of Worſhip, *did adde that* Preface: *which now having done, by theſe interpretations which our Brethren preſent, we ſhould not onely take on us, to call upon the Parliament, to exclude* other tender conſciences *from this forbearance and to impoſe upon them, but make* Impoſitions *of* Directory *and* Confeſſions of Faith *in the* latitude *of the* Body of Divinity, *and* not *in* fundamentals *only; and that not only upon the* Miniſters *but upon* all the people *of this Kingdome; and that as a* qualification *for receiving Sacraments: Our Brethrens Principles may be larger, for power in Eccleſiaſticall Aſſemblies to determine and impoſe* circumſtantial orders *in worſhip, as well as in the* ſubſtance, *and therefore for us to joyn with our Brethren to have all thoſe things impoſed on us, which they can beare, ſeems hard to us.*

"Which things being premiſed, (*ſay our Brethren*) we "have found it needful and moſt conſonant to the buſineſſe, "to take firſt into conſideration, *the third Propoſition* of our "Bretherns particular deſires under the Head of Presbytery, "unto which all the reſt have ſo neceſſary a relation, which "they have offered to this Honourable Committee.

Concerning which we humbly conceive.

I. "That this deſire of our Brethren is not to be granted "to them *interminis*, for the reaſons which we herewithall "humbly offer.

1 "Becauſe it holds out a plaine and totall ſeperation from "the Rule, as if, in nothing, it were to be complyed "with; nor our Churches to be communicated within "an thing, which ſhould argue Church-Communion; "more could not be ſaid or done againſt falſe Churches.

To this firſt Reaſon.

Anſw.

1. A deſire *to have* liberty *for multitudes, that cannot out of a tenderneſſe of conſcience partake* as members *in your Churches, to* gather into congregations *to enjoy the ordinances; not onely profeſſing your Churches to be* true Churches, *yea* not *daring to* judge *them for that, for which they are in reſpect of their owne conſciences enforced to, namely, to preſerve themſelves from ſin againſt their conſciences to remove from that communion with them; and though gathering into other congregations for the purer enjoyment (as to their conſciences) of all ordinances, yet ſtill* maintaining

taining communion *with them as Churches,* (*as is expreſſed in the third Paragraph*) is far from ſeparation, *much leſſe a* plain *and* totall ſeparation. The Aſſembly *having in what they have given up unto the honorable Houſes ſaid thus*, Nor is it lawfull for any member of a Parochiall congregation, if the Ordinances be there adminiſtred in purity, to go and ſeek them elſewhere ordinarily, *ſo as in caſe the Lords Supper be* not *in* purity *adminiſtred, a* removall *is allowed ordinarily. And this is not* ſetting up Churches againſt Churches, but neighbour ſiſter Churches of a differing judgement: *If the pureſt Churches in the world* (*unto our judgement in all other reſpects,*) *ſhould* impoſe as a condition *of receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper* any one *thing that* ſuch *tender conſciences cannot joyne in* (*as ſuppoſe* kneeling *in the act of receiving, which was the* caſe *of* Scotland *and* England) *if they* remove *from theſe Churches, and have* liberty *from a State to gather into other Churches to injoy this and other Ordinances*; *here is* no ſeparation.

2. *A* plaine *and* totall ſeparation from the rule *is not in ſuch Churches, unleſſe they* wholly *in* all things *differ, by ſetting up* altogether differing rules *of conſtitution worſhip and government: Now in the Churches we deſire we ſhall* practice *the* moſt *of the* ſame *things; and theſe the moſt* ſubſtantiall *which are found in the* Rule *it ſelfe*: The ſame *Ordinances of*

worſhip *in the* Directory, *the* ſame Officers, Paſtors, Teachers, Ruling Elders, *of the* ſame qualification *required in the Rule: the ſame* qualification of members *the Aſſembly its ſelfe holds forth to have beene in the Primitive Churches, viz.* viſible Saints, that being of age do profeſſe faith in Chriſt, and obedience unto Chriſt, according to the Rules of Faith and life taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles: *and theſe officers to joyne into one* Elderſhip *in* all acts *of government of the Church*: *Holding alſo the* ſame cenſures, *namely, of* Admonition, *and* Excommunication *and* Abſolution *and receiving in upon repentance*; *And who,* wherein *they* differ *from the Rule will be* accountable *of* all *their wayes and* tenets *unto thoſe, whom the* State *ſhall be pleaſed to* appoint. *And,*

3. *Holding and retaining* communion *with* neighbour Churches *in* Baptizing our children (*as occaſion may fall out of abſence of our Miniſters*) *in* their Churches, *and by* occaſionall *receiving the Lords Supper in their Churches, and receiving* ſuch *members of theirs,* as are *above mentioned, unto communion with us alſo* occaſionally: *Alſo* our Miniſters *to* preach *in their Congregations, and receive* theirs *alſo to preach* in ours, *as* Miniſters *of the Goſpel, as mutually there ſhall be a* call *from each other: And when we have any* Caſes difficult *and hard for our ſelves*, electively *to* adviſe *with the Elders of*

their

their Churches: And in case of controversie *not to refuse* to call *them in, for the* composing *of it. Further, in case of the* choyce of Elders, *to seek the approbation and* right-hand of fellowship from godly Ministers *of* their *Churches together with our owne: And when an* Ordination *fals out among us, to desire the* presence *and* approbation *of* their *Elders with our owne: And in case* any *of our Churches* miscarry *through* Mal-administration *or neglect of censures, to be willing, upon* scandall taken *by* their *Churches to* give an account, *as to* sister *Churches offended: And to esteeme and account* (*as we do*) *a* sentence of Non-communion *by them, as Churches, against us, upon such scandals wherein they are not satisfied,* an heavie and sad punishment, *and to be looked at as* a meanes *to humble us, and an* Ordinance *of God to reduce us. All this is more than* AS IF IN NOTHING THEY WERE TO BE COMPLYED WITH, NOR THEIR CHURCHES TO BE COMMUNICATED WITH IN ANY THING WHICH SHOULD ARGUE CHURCH COMMUNION, *More is said and done by these that account them* false *Churches.*

To the second Reason.

2. "It plainly holds out the lawfulnesse of gathering "Churches out of true Churches, yea out of such true "Churches which are indeavouring further to reform "according to the word of God: whereof we are "assured there is not the least hint of an example in all "the Book of God.

To

We anſwer.

That, this Reaſon is founded upon this ſuppoſition, that nothing ought to be tolerated which is unlawfull in the judgement of thoſe who are to tolerate: *and if ſo, then by the like reaſon* no State, *no Aſſembly, no Presbytery is to tolerate* any *practice or opinion which they account to be in* the leaſt erroneous.

2. *The way we are to go, is* not *to* diſpute *what is* unlawfull *or* lawfull *in it ſelfe, becauſe we are upon the point of* forbearance, *in what is* thought unlawfull.

3. *For that addition* ["*out of ſuch true Churches* "*which are endeavouring to reforme*] *we ſay, The* Reformation *which the Aſſembly hath* ultimately *pitcht upon,* ſatisfies not *our conſciences, as our Brethren know.*

4. *For that addition* ["*that there is no hint of ex-* "*ample in all the book of God for gathering Churches out of Churches*] *we ſhall onely,* at this time *humbly preſent the* nature *of the thing or* CASE it ſelfe, *as it lies in our conſciences and as* in the Aſſembly we alſo ſtated it.

The caſe is this, A multitude of beleevers after all means uſed to obtaine light, to ſatisfie their conſciences in what to them is ſin in partaking of the Ordinances as members of the Churches they live

or

an unclived in, by which, so long as they continue in these Churches, they shall be debarred from these ordinances, though it be all their dayes; and although the opinion bee judged an errour by those Churches they live in, yet of no higher nature then those errours, for which they are not to be suspended from any ordinance, by censure; or cast out of the Church; and in all other things are such in their opinions and practises, as are meet partakers of Communion with Christ in all ordinances, which as their right, as members of his mystical body, he hath give to them as to their brethren. *In this case, there is* no obligation *laid by Christ either on the* persons *themselves,* for ever to continue in those Churches; *or* on the Churches *they live in,* to withhold them from removing, *to other Churches, free of that, which would defile their consciences; or,* when *there are* no such Churches *in the places they live in* TO GATHER INTO CHURCHES, *wherein they may injoy all ordinances without sin.* This assertion, as thus stated, we are ready to debate, when this Honourable Committee shall think fit.

To the third Reason.

3. "In granting this, the Parliament should grant li-
"berty to destroy and pull downe what themselves are
"endeavouring to set up.

Answ.

An exception doth not make void a rule: *especially*

such a one, as is not founded on a Jus Divinum, and where it is, in the power of those, who make the rule to grant a forbearance from it. The reformed Churches grant a forbearance; and yet their generall rule *stands. And we in our* DESIRES, *do submit to this Honourable* Committee, *to find out such wayes as may best stand with the peace of the Kingdome.*

To the fourth Reason.

4. "The indulgence they seek is a greater priviledge "then they shall enjoy who shall be under the Rule, "as may appeare in severall particulars. 1. Such as own "the Rule, must live in the same Parish with the other "members of their Church: These may live any where, "and be of any Church they please, yea though a "Church of their own way, were in the place where "they live. 2. If such as live under the rule would bet-"ter themselvs, in living under the Pastoral charge of "another Minister, they must remove their dwellings; "These need not.

Answ.

The Priviledge of those Ministers who submit to the Rule is to be capable of all Ecclesiastical preferments, *which we are not.* They find no need *of indulgence to their consciences as touching* the rule *established, which* we do; *possibly their consciences may be scrupled in the same or other things* hereafter, *and they have the priviledge of the same addresses for relief, we have.*

And as for the two particulars *therein expressed,*

we

we say first, it is a privilege, and much to be desired to dwell neer together, and we also shall indeavour it as much as may be for mutuall edification. Secondly it is the right of every man (*we humbly conceive*) to choose his own Minister, *whereas the parishes and their bounds by dwellings, are but* of Civill right: provided the State be pleased, to take some order that it may be known, whether every man doth resort.

To the fifth Reason.

5. "This would give countenance to a perpetual Schisme, "and division in the Church, still drawing away some "from the Churches under the Rule, which also "would breed many irritations between the parties "going away, and those whom they leave; And a- "gain between the Church that should be forsaken, "and that to which they should go.

We answer.

What hurt the abuse of words, and among others this of Schisme *hath done in the Churches, our Brethren know, and we all have felt; wherefore seeing as yet the* Assembly hath not debated, *nor the* State *determined*, what Schisme is, *we desire our Brethren that in the seeking to countenance that way, which they think is right, they would not seek to cast an odium upon their Brethren, who differ from them, and yet together with them,* desire (*in faithfulnesse*) to know

and obey the mind of Christ, *by fastning such a name upon them, or their way.*

2. *What we desire forbearance in, will countenance* only this: *When men who give good testimony of their Godlinesse and Peaceablenesse, after all means used in faithfulnesse to know the mind of Christ, they yet cannot without sin, to them, enjoy all the ordinances of Christ, and partake in all the duties of worship, as members of that Congregation, where there dwelling is, they, therefore in* humility *and* meekneſſe desire, *they may* not live without ordinances; *but for the injoyment of them for their edification in their spirituall good* may joyn in another congregation; *yet so, as* not condemning *those* Churches *they join not with*, as false, *but still preserving all Christian communion with the Saints of the same body of Christ, & Of the Church-catholick, & joyne with them*, in all duties of worship, *that belong to particular Churches*, so far as they are able. *If* this be called Schisme, or countenance of Schisme, *it is more then yet we have learned from the Scriptures, or any* approved Authors.

3. *And as for that imitation our Brethren speak of, is* (*in our humble conceit, it will be according to the temper of mens hearts. If such a practice meets with men, whose hearts are gracious, it will only irritate them to search further into the mind of Christ, and to walke before their Brethren with more exactnesse, and*

to

to exercise love, meekness and forbearance towards their brethren who differ from them; and such irritation *there is no great cause that either we, or our brethren should make complaints of.* If this liberty *meet with* corruption, *it is like enough there may* accidentally *be* an irritation to sin, *but* the way *then to oppose such corruption, is by* instruction, prayer, walking convincingly *before them: and* if *they grow* turbulent, *to call in the help of the* Civil Magistrate; *but not to give that respect to their corruptions*, as to deny *to men, who give undeniable testimony of their Godlinesse*, that use of the ordinances of Christ, *that they may with the peace of their consciences enjoy.*

To the sixth Reason.

6. "This would introduce *all manner of confusion*, in familyes, where the Members were of Severall Churches; "and exceedingly, if not altogether hinder the mutuall "edification, that might be afforded and received a-"mongst them. And specially in great Familyes, it "would be impossible for the Governours, to have a "sure account of all their familyes attending upon the "Ordinances, when twenty of them may possibly be of "twenty severall Churches; and much lesse take account "of their profiting by the Ordinances."

Answer.

I. First in generall, *our judgements do thus far agree with yours, that* except upon very waighty consi-

considerations, *husband and wife, masters and servants, should partake together in the same Ministry.*

II. Secondly, *If it should happen to be otherwise:*

1. "All manner of confusion would not here-"by be introduced into families: *For can our Brethren think, that persons agreeing in all the* fundamentals of their faith, *and in their judgment and practice joyning* in al the same duties of piety *in the family; and also agreeing in the* same duties of publick worship, *for the substance, though not living under the same individual Ministry,* yet *unlesse they do agree* also *in an* uniformity, *both publike and private, they must needs run into all manner of confusion? hath either* nature, *or the* Gospel *put such a necessity upon uniformity, in lesser things, to keep families from confusion? If this were the Gospel, then except it prevail upon the opinion of those whom it converts* to such an uniformity (*which it seldome doth*) *it must by this principle, of necessity,* subvert humane society, *by bringing confusion into families, which we conceive to be a great* derogation *to the Gospel.*

2. "*Neither would it* exceedingly, *much lesse* al-"together, hinder the mutuall edification, *that might be afforded and received amongst them.*

For first, although persons of the same family, not living under the same Ministry, may in some

some respect of family duties, not so fully edifie, as otherwise; yet in a great measure, they may: and if there be a zeal, and good conscience in any of the family, to be helpful in good conference, &c. It is no such great hinderance to heare in severall places, or severall Preachers; As Schollars reading severall Books, and then conferring. *Many good Christians have for edification purposely practiced it; and it hath* some advantages for edification, *which the other way hath not.*

Secondly, that *further* degree *of edification, which comes to the persons in a family, by going* all to the same Ministry, *amounts not to* that proportion, *as to countervaile the* want of enjoying the publick ordinances for ever; *which compared with family duties, simply considered, have had the preeminence, both in respect to Gods Glory, and the edification of souls, in all mens concessions; which cannot be enjoyed by many that yet are truly consciencious, except the liberty petitioned be granted.*

III. Thirdly, "For the account, Governours, in "great families, are to take of all in their families "attending upon the ordinances, and of their pro-"fiting thereby: *We answer, the Churches we desire, being constant and fixed, it is no more impossible, then it was for* a Godly Tutor in *the University to take* ac-

account of his Pupils, *having liberty to go to* ſeverall Churches. *And,*

III. Fourthly, "*Whereas it is heightned,* that "twenty of one family may poſſibly be of twenty "ſeverall Churches, *we ſuppoſe if the State be pleaſed to grant us the liberty we petition for, that they in their wiſedome (to which we have referred our ſelves) will take into conſideration, the limitting ſuch congregations to a certain number; and then there may not be* twenty Churches, *in any city or Town, to divide themſelves into.*

But the truth is, thoſe that thus plead againſt this permiſſion (which we deſire) as inſufferable, muſt certainly ſuppoſe that men are to be tyed, *throughout this Kingdome,* to their own pariſh Churches, *where they live, both Maſters and ſervants, and that not only for* ſacraments, *but for* conſtant hearing: *which how burdenſome it was in former times, the godly people are very ſenſible of; and now in the time of* Reformation, *it finds many Miniſters who cannot be caſt out, by order of Law, though bad and unprofitable, as appears by the leaving them out of the* Claſſes; *and ſhall* the people *be tyed to live under them, as* their Miniſter, *who are not worthy to joyn* in Government, with your ſelves? *and for time to come, as places are void, they muſt be ſupplyed by the choice of others for them, or by themſelves* if by themſelves, *all pariſhes are not reformed, as concerning the people*

people, and whereas the major part being generally the worst, the Ministers chosen by them, will be such as the godly cannot live under their Ministry: If by others, *those that are the chusers, may also be such as they cannot be denyed by law, their right in choosing, and so also improfitable Ministers, may be put upon the godly people*, And if they be not tyed to their parishes, the weight of this reason, and the inconveniences presented, will fall more heavy upon the numerous multitude of parishes in city and countrey.

For the Rules *towards an* Expedient, *and the* Preface thereunto. *Numb.* II. & III. *We humbly conceive our Brethren have not made a compleat report in that point of what they intend (as was intimated,) and therefore that this Honourable Committee doth not expect that we should speak any thing to it, till that part of their Answer be perfected.*

Let the *Reader* take notice, that an Answer to the *second part* of the former Answer of the sub-Committee of Divines, was afterwards given in to the Honourable Committee, by their command. And comes in printed after the Reioynder (that next followes) made by the sub-Committee of Divines to this Answer of the Dissenting Brethren, in that Order it was given in to the Honorable Committee.

After some debate upon the cautions premised, in the paper of Sub-committee, presented *Decemb.* 15. and drawn out of the Brethrens Preface, it was resolved by the *Honourable Committee:*

Resolved that both the affirmative and negative of the second caution, shall be put unto the Question; and accordingly it was.

Resolved upon the Question, that they which agree in the substance of the worship of God in the Directory, according to the Preface, and agree in the Confession of Faith, and with the doctrine of the Reformed Churches, contained in their confessions and writings, as we do, who differ from those brethren in matters of Discipline, shall have the benefit of this indulgence.

Resolved upon the Question, that such as agree not in those things which contain the substance of the worship of God in the Directory, according to the Preface, and shall not agree in the Confession of Faith, nor with the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, contained in their confessions and writings, as we do, who differ from these Brethren in matters of Discipline, shall not have the benefit of this Indulgence.

Resolved upon the Question, that the Brethrens Paper this day brought in shall be referred to the Sub-committee to consider of it, and they are further to go on with the work begun; and the Brethren to go on with their answer to the former Paper of the Sub-committee.

Jan. 23. 1645. The Committee met again, and the sub-committee presented a Reply to the Answer of the Dissenting Brethren, brought in *Decemb.* 23. 1645. which is as followeth.

A Reply to An Answer brought in to this Honourable Committee, (*Decem.* 23. 1645.) unto a paper formerly tendred by a Sub-Committee of the Divines of the Assembly.

To their Preface.

OUr Reverend Brethren being charged with an unwillingnesse to pursue the method prescribed in the Order of the Honourable Houses, which was in the first place to endeavour an Accommodation, do declare. 1. *That in a Sub-committee twelve moneths since, they had earnestly endeavoured such an Accommodation, and made a great progresse therein.* 2. *That the Rule being now resolved on, unto which they had entred their dissent, it is by that meanes become impossible for them to endeavour an Accommodation; which implyeth an agreement in one common Rule; since they doe not presume to seeke a new Rule to be made.*

To which we say, That although our Brethren had entred their dissent against some particulars of the Rule established (for we know not that any dissent was ever entred against the whole,) yet the Honourable Houses being pleased in their Order to *prescribe* this method of proceeding, and to *require the endeavour of an Accommodation*, which Order, notwithstanding any such dissent of our Brethren, they have in their wisedome and zeal for the peace of the Church, thought good to renew, we conceive our Brethren (as well as our selves) were obliged first to have endeavoured an obedience to it, before they declare that that

is in their judgement impossible to bee done, which the wisdome of the Houses (notwithstanding they were not ignorant of the cause, upon which that pretended impossibility is grounded) have been pleased to require, and therefore we humbly declare, that *the onely stop of endeavouring an Accommodation is in our Brethren themselves, and not in the Honourable Houses, or in us.*

And for the *progresse* which they say, *was formerly made in a Sub-Committee towards an Accommodation*, that should the more have encouraged them at this time in the same endeavor. But indeed we find by the acts of that Treaty,

1. That the sub-Committee declared, That they saw no probability of any Accommodation with our Brethren, because they could not perceive any willingnesse in them to take any such congregations, as ours, which some of them have since that time professed they cannot do.

2. That they did not yeild any thing towards any union with us, but every where put in exceptions to the Propolals tending thereunto. So that in that Accommodation they did in a manner fully demand according to their principles, the same things by way of exception, which they now crave by way of Toleration.

3. In that Treaty, they desired *the liberty of gathering churches*, yet then seemed to doubt whether this Honourable Committee would not judge it a thing prejudicial to the state. But now they wholly insist upon it, only referring the manner how it may stand with the publick peace to the consideration of this Honourable Committee.

They say *that in the nature of the thing, without supposition of the Rule, as now it is established, they and we agree in common principles enough, and sufficient to have preserved the Churches and Saints in these Kingdomes in peace.* Whereunto we answer. 1. If so, that again should have encouraged them to proceed in the Treaty of Accommodation,

modation. 2. We conceive those common principles are those only which concern the power of congregations, which they misapply to an independency, and if the peace of the Churches must have been preserved by our making the same use of those Principles, it is evident it must have been procured not by an Accommodation between us, but by our going over to our Brethren, and acquiescing in their way. 3. What ever agreement may be in other things, there is none in that which is fundamentall to the very constitution of Churches, namely, the qualification of members, wherein their principles are so farre from permitting them to joyne with us, and so to lay any grounds of peace, that indeed they lead them to draw members continually from us unto separation.

4. They make no mention of any mutuall bond to preserve Churches in Truth and Godlinesse for mutuall edification, wherein we think their way is much defective. Nor lastly, do they tell us how others, whom they look not on as Saints, shall be dealt withall, and brought in, they having in their way no Pastorall relation unto any such: and we doubt not but our way will continue to be, as it hath been effectuall to that purpose, if we be not disturbed in it by our brethrens opposition.

They say, *the Honourable Houses not having seene their differences and reasons against subordination of Assemblies, when they renewed this order, might thinke that they might accommodate with the Rule which they have set forth.* To which we answer. 1. That the Honourable Houses cannot be ignorant of their judgement in this point, it appearing evidently in their dissent and reasons against Classicall Presbyteries, and in their disclaiming of Synods to have power of Government. 2. Let our brethren joyn with us in the rest, and we doubt not to find out some expedient to ease them in this particular.

They proceed, *neither will such a forbearance as we seeke,*

endanger Schisme, because there may be a variation in a greater latitude, from a Government that is established on a Divine Right, much more from one which is not established on a Jus Divinum, *when the Government it selfe hath its authority but from the State, a forbearance from it by the State, which Lawes to prevent contentions, cannot be Schisme, or any way endanger it: the nature of Schisme, according to the Scriptures, consisting in an open breach of Christian love, and not in every diversity of opinion or practice; yea as both others, and we also have found the great cause of Schisme, hath beene a strict obligation of all to an uniformity, beyond that of the Apostle, that so farre as we have attained, we should walk by the same rule; and if any be otherwise minded, God will reveale it in his time.*

How farre this forbearance may endanger a Schisme, comes after to be considered, nor are we satisfied what greater variation may be without Schisme, then to confesse Churches to be true, and yet to require separated Churches from them of another constitution. Their observation, that forbearance when a Government hath its authority from the State only, cannot be schisme, doth not lay an aspersion on the Rule, as if it were meerly and totally humane, and had nothing of the will of God in it; but doth clearly open a wide gap for as many as either by them in their way, or by any others in other wayes can be perswaded of a divine Right elsewhere, to shake off their obedience and submission unto it. Nor can laws to prevent contentions, hinder such a dangerous consequence as this, for who will not hold himself bound, upon such premises, to contend earnestly for the way of God, against meer humane constitution, who will not rather lay hold on the Priviledge of a Toleration, to be amongst these of the godly party, as they call themselves, and in the way of Christ, as they speak, then to continue under such a Rule, and in such a Communion for Government as is charged to be meerly of an humane originall?

nall? Such a Toleration to be provided before-hand, not only for persons already separated from us, but for as many as art and industry for all time to come, can be able to gain unto the same perswasion, from the obedience of the Rule established, was we beleeve, never yet demanded of the Christian Magistrate by any in Churches confessed by themselves to be true; especially considering that those who demand it, have bound themselves by Covenant to *indeavour to bring all the Churches of God in these Kingdomes to the nearest uniformity and conjunction, and to extirpate Schisme.* And albeit this Schisme consists not in every diversity of opinion or practise, but in an open breach of Christian love, yet we see not how our brethren can acquit themselves even by this Rule, when they openly professe a necessity *recede from our Churches as members*, while yet they *acknowledge them to be true Churches of Christ.* Thus to depart from true Churches, is not to hold Communion with them, as such, but rather by departing to declare them not to be such. Surely at best we may say of this course as the Philosopher did of the Milesians, *Milesii quidem non sunt insipientes, ea tamen agunt quæ insipientes.*

And although no Uniformity were necessary against Schisme, yet to our Brethren, by vertue of their Covenant, it is *aliquousque* necessary, so farre as the Apostle directs, which is, *whereunto we have attained to walk by the same Rule.* Therefore agreeing with us in Worship and Doctrine, and acknowledging our Churches, Ordinances and Ministers to be true, so true, as that they can occasionally joyne with us in all acts of Worship, we conceive they ought in these things to act in joynt communion with us by one common Rule, and not by different Rules, and in separated Congregations. And certainly Gods way of revealing truth to such as are otherwise minded, is not by setting men at a distance from one another, but by keeping them *in the unity of the spirit*, to walke together peaceably and regularly

lady in that wherevnto they have attained, and more is not desired of our Reverend Brethren.

To their Answer to the three first Premises.

We need not make any large Reply to their Answer to our three Premises. The first they do not deny, but acknowledge in their Explanations. The second is Voted in this Honourable Committee. And the third we doubt not but the Honourable Houses will adde. Their reasons moving them to decline the negative, and impositions, and the setting bounds of forbearance to all tender consciences, wee will therefore examine.

But when our Brethren alledge, *that to wipe off aspersions, prejudices, and suspitions which were upon them, and to make a full and candid Declaration of their agreements in point of Doctrine and substance of Worship, they added the Preface:* If they meane the agreement of their owne persons (who brought in that Paper) in these things, we know not any necessity of so doing, they not having been ever charged with disagreements of that nature: and besides it would have no relation to the desires of our Brethren which are not for their own persons alone, but for all others of their judgement in the matters of difference betweene them and us; but if they meane all others of that judgement, we conceive it a difficult thing to affirme *that all such do agree in Worship and Doctrine with the Reformed Churches, as we and our Brethren do.* And therefore except our interpretation of it, which they dislike, be admitted, we cannot look on it otherwise then as a Cipher before a Number, which is of no signification at all.

In the next place our Brethren misinterpret our intentions, when they say, *we make these impositions upon the people as a qualification of receiving Sacraments*, for we desire to have no more imposed on our people, then they in that case

do

do on theirs, namely that they appeare to us to be Orthodox.

Lastly, We wonder at our Brethrens conclusion of this point touching the largeness of our principles for power in Ecclesiasticall Assemblies to determine and impose circumstanciall matters, seeing our proposition *in terminis* doth mention nothing but agreement in substance, according to their own words; therefore for them to refuse to joyn with us in setling those things which they declare they agree in, seemeth hard unto us, and doth too much intimate an unwillingnesse to come to that neernes of conjunction, which may settle us in one body without offence.

For the Brethrens answer to our first reason against their desire of Toleration as it is by them expressed, we shall premise these few observations to our Reply.

1. They seem to grant that *a plain & totall separation from the rule, or our Churches, as no true Churches, is not to be indulged*, which strengtheneth our reason.

2. They suppose *some things in our Congregations will be so far offensive to Multitudes who are of tender Consciences, that they will not dare to partake as Members therein.* This is a hard judgment to entertaine against Churches, which are under the tye of a *Solemn Covenant, endeavouring a reformation according to Gods word.* We desire the particular matters of offence may be expressed, professing our earnest endeavor, so much as in us lies, to remove whatever may hinder comfortable Communion, that there may be no just occasion of separation.

3. We desire to know whether every persons bare alleaging tenderness of Conscience shall be sufficient to warrant his deserting of our Congregations; or if not, what shall be the rule of discerning, or who the judges in such a case?

4. We conceive that our Brethrens ground of separation from one Church, & gathering others, to this end that men

may be preserved from sinning against their Consciences & for the purer enjoyments of ordinances as to their Consciences, may, to men of other judgments be a ground to crave toleration for separating from Churches which are constituted in all things according to Gods word in the sense of our Brethren, and gathering impure and corrupt Churches out of them; because upon the dictate of an erring Conscience (whereby Multitudes may be infected) men may really disallow Churches which are pure, in some particulars wherein they are pure, and set up others which are more suitable to their own erring Conscience; and consequently, as many severall sorts of Churches may be set up in a State, as the severall dictates of erroneous Consciences may suggest; If our brethren conceive this ought not to be done in different cases from theirs, they must give us leave to judge that neither in theirs it ought to be done.

5. Whereas they give a character of those whom they desire indulgence for, to be *such as acknowledge our Churches to be true Churches, as dare not judge them in that for which they leave them; and such as maintaine Communion with those Churches, as Churches, which they leave*, in severall particulars expressed in their third paragraph, we desire it may be declared, that none other shall have the benefit of that indulgence which shall be granted, then they who are thus minded.

In this answer our Brethren say, *A desire to have liberty for Multitudes who cannot out of tenderness of conscience partake as Members in your Churches, to gather into Congregations to enjoy the ordinances, not onely professing your Churches to be true Churches, yea not daring to judge them for that for which they are in respect of their own consciences enforced to, namely to preserve themselves from sin against their consciences, to remove from that communion with them; and though gathering into other Congregations for the purer enjoyment (as to their consciences) of all ordinances, yet still maintaining communion with them as*

Churches

Churches, as is expressed in the third paragraph, is far from separation, much lesse a plaine and totall separation.

We answer not to the *English*, (for who ever called desire of Liberty, a Separation?) But to the matter, 1. We know not whom they meane by Multitudes; If Congregations, we would gladly know where they are, and how they may be known and distinguished, that we may be able to judge whether this character do agree unto them, or whether they will owne that, which our Brethren here affirme of them: (For it is dubious unto us, whether there be Multitudes of such who are thus minded) If single persons, we have already expressed our sense how farre they may be indulged, appearing to be such as are here described. 2. We much doubt whether such tenderness of Conscience as ariseth out of an opinion *Cui potest subesse falsum*, when the Conscience is so tender, as that it may be withall an erring Conscience, can be a sufficient ground to justifie such a materiall separation as our Brethren plead for; For, though it may binde to forbeare or suspend the act of Communion in that particular wherein Men conceive they cannot hold Communion without sin, (nothing being to be done contrary unto Conscience;) yet it doth not binde to follow such a positive prescript as possibly may be divers from the will and counsell of God, of which kinde we conceive this of gathering separated Churches out of other true Churches to be one.

They add an Assertion of the Assembly, in these words, *nor is it lawfull for any Member* of a Parochiall Congregation, if the ordinances be there administred in *purity, to go and seek them elsewhere ordinarily*; and thence inferre, in *case the Lords Supper be not in purity administred, a removeall is allowed ordinarily.*

We answer 1. It was never the meaning of the Assembly to leave the judgement of pure or impure ordinances in this case, unto the alone discretion of a particular person, but

before any leave their Parochiall Congregation, upon this pretence ordinarily, he ought to declare the cause of his grievance, that if it may be his removall may be prevented, except he think fit to change his dwelling, in which case his removall is without offence. 2. It is one thing to remove to a Congregation which is under the same rule, another to a Congregation of a different constitution from the rule; in the former case a man retaines his membership, though for some defects he seek elswhere, til those defects be by the care of the officers of the Church cured: in the latter he renounceth his membership upon difference of judgement touching the very constitution of the Churches from and unto which he removes.

It followes, *If the purest Churches in the world unto our judgment in all other respects, should impose as a condition of receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper any one thing that such tender consciences cannot joyn in (as suppose kneeling in the act of receiving, which was the case of* Scotland *and* England) *if they remove from these Churches and have liberty from a State to gather into other Churches, to injoy this and other ordinances, here is no separation.*

We answer 1. If a Church require that which is evill of any Member, he must forbeare to do it, yet without separation, and waite on Gods providence in the dispensation of that Church, till all remedies have been tried. 2. He that is in this kinde oppressed, may be releived by Appeale, or change of dwelling. 3. They who thought kneeling in the act of Communion to be unlawfull, either in *England* or *Scotland*, did not separate or renounce Membership, but did some of them with zeal & learning defend our Churches against those of the separation. 4. Those words [*If they have liberty from the State to gather into other Churches*] seeme to imply that otherwise that liberty may not be taken; else we know not of what use they are; but we thinke our Brethren will not abide by that sense, having now for some years without leave from the State gathered themselves into separated

rated Churches, even then when the State have been and still are labouring to reforme the Church according to Gods word. 5. The nature of separation is not to be measured by civill acts of State, but by the word of God; what notion our Brethren have of it we know not, but surely to leave all ordinary communion in any Church with dislike, when opposition or offence offers it selfe, is to separate from such a Church in the Scripture sense; such separation was not in being in the Apostles time, unlesse it were used by false teachers; all who professed Christianity held communion together as in one Church, notwithstanding differences of judgment, or corruptions in practice.

In their second paragraph they say, *A plain and totall separation from the rule is not in such Churches, unless they wholly in all things differ, by setting up altogether differing rules of constitution, worship and government.*

Of this assertion we expect some proofe; we read not the like in any Author ancient or modern. Under this pretence, *Novatians*, *Donatists*, all that ever were thought to separate might shelter themselves; the most rigide *Separatists*, who themselves boast of their separation, hold the same rule of worship and government for substance, with our Brethren: and consequently by this rule they must boast no longer of their separation, which is become by this meanes none, or no plaine and totall one.

In the next words they say so much of their agreement with us, that we cannot conceive any sufficient ground left for their separation from us. *We shall practise, say they most of the same things, and those the most substantiall; we shall have the same ordinances of worship, as in the Directory, the same officers, and of the same qualification, the same qualification of Members which the Assembly holds forth.*

But here they leave out Infants, which the Assembly did expresse, and amongst censures, suspension, in which they agree not amongst themselves; But we are glad to hear them

professe to agree with us in practice of most of the same things, and those the most substantiall in the rule it selfe; and we are the more sorry to have heard them professe that the nature of the business, & the whole frame and bulk of the rule is such, as that they are not able to endeavour an accommodation with it, but are necessitated to desire a Toleration, for gathering Congregations under another rule of their own, never yet by them manifested to us.

We desire our Brethren to consider, if every small and circumstantiall difference amongst those who agree in most things, and those most substantiall, shall be a sufficient ground to gather Churches out of Churches into a separate and different communion, how the Church of God shal ever be kept free from rents and divisions, and how the peace thereof is possible to be preserved?

To these agreements they add, *That wherein they differ from the rule, they will be accomptable of all their wayes and tenets unto those whom the State shall be pleased to appoint.*

We answer 1. That in this also we agree with them, for all things done by our Assemblies; for as we dare not claime an intire, absolute, independent power within our selves free from Classes and Synods, so neither dare we exempt our Classes and Synods from the power and inspection of the State. 2. Albeit our Brethren insinuate much respect and submission to the State, yet we find not, that they petitioned the State, or obtained leave from them to practice their own Church-way, but did it of themselves, and that by way of anticipation to the State, when it had declared a resolution to reforme the Church according to Gods word; and wee beleeve they would continue as they have begun, though the State should forbid them. 3. what if the State should at any time be pleased to appoint Synods and Classes to take an accompt of our Brethrens wayes and tenets, would they herein acquiesce? But to proceed,

In their third Paragraph they shew what communion they will hold with neighbour Churches. *Holding and retaining* (say they) *communion with the neighbour Churches in baptizing our children, as occasion may fall out of absence of our Ministers in their Churches: and by occasion all receiving the Lords Supper in their Churches, and receiving such members of theirs, as are above mentioned, into communion with us also occasionally. Also our Ministers to preach in their congregations, and receive theirs also to preach in ours as Ministers of the Gospel; as mutually there shall be a call from each other: and when we have any cases difficult and too hard for our selves, electively to advise with the Elders of their Churches: and in case of controversie, not to refuse to call them in for the composing of it. Further in case of the choise of Elders, to seeke the approbation, and right-hand of fellowship from godly Ministers of their Churches together with our own. And when an Ordination fals out amongst us, to desire the presence and approbation of their Elders with our own. And in case any of our Churches miscarry through mal-administration or neglect of censures, to be willing upon scandall taken by their Churches to give an account as to sister Churches offended: and to esteeme and account (as we do) a sentence of non-communion by them as Churches, against us, upon such scandals wherein they are not satisfied, an heavy and sad punishment, and to be looked on as a meanes to humble us, and an Ordinance of God to reduce us. All this is more then as if in nothing they were to be complyed with, nor their Churches to be communicated with in any thing which should argue Church communion. More is said, and done, by those that account them false Churches.*

To these things we answer, first in generall. 1. That in most of these particulars they have *de facto* estranged themselves from us hitherto, and therefore we have reason to question in what sense they account our Ministers and Churches true. 2. If they may occasionally exercise these acts of communion with us once, or a second, or third time,

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without sinne, we know no reason why it may not be ordinary, without sinne too, and then separation and Church gathering would have been needlesse. To seperate from those Churches ordinarily and visibly, with whom occasionally you may joyne without sinne, seemeth to be a most unjust separation. 3. All the communion here spoken of, is but *ad placitum*, we desire to know whether our brethren will be bound to these particulars as conditions of the indulgence to be granted, as,

1. That no Officer be chosen in their Congregations without the consent of the Churches in that Classis.

2. That they and their members give an account before the Officers in the Classis, who shall, as they see occasion, assemble to require it of them. The separatists at *Amsterdam* received none into communion with them out of the Dutch, French, and other reformed Churches there inhabiting, but required them to advertice the Elders first, and then the whole body of the Church whereof they were (if they might be suffered) of the corruptions for which they thought to leave them; but our brethren have taken out of our Congregations into theirs, without shewing any cause, and their silence in this particular implyes they intend to do the like for the time to come, though they cannot be ignorant of the great offence our Ministers and people doe take at it.

F. Johnston in his inquiry and answer to Th. White, pag. 25.

3. We desire to know whether they will submit the power of Jurisdiction in their particular congregations to the power of Arbitration, which they give to Synods, or will rescind any sentence upon the determination of a Synod, or at the command of the State.

To the particulars. 1. They say they *will Baptize their children, and receive the Lords Supper occasionally in our Churches.* It then followes, that a Minister is a Minister out of the bounds of his own Congregation, and so to the Church indefinitely; for members of 20 or more severall congrega-

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tions may occasionally communicate with one Minister in a distinct congregation from all those; this serves much to strengthen our grounds for the Presbyteriall Government, and to weaken Independency.

2. *They can preach in our congregations, and admit us to do the like as Ministers in theirs.* No need then of separate Churches for the exercise of their Ministery.

3. *In difficult cases too hard for themselves, they can electively advise with Ethe lders of our Churches.* Ordinarily then they will assume a power to determine controversies and cases of Conscience within themselves, and not make use of the advice of others but at their own discretion. 2. This intimates another and greater power assumed by particular congregations, namely to call Synods, more or fewer, smaller or greater, when they please themselves, which liberty of what consequence it may prove to the State, we leave it to this honourable Committee to consider.

4. In case of controversie *they will not refuse to call our Elders in for composing of it.* 1. This is *ad libitum*, they wll have no arbitrators but whom and when they please. 2. They shall have but a consultative power for counsell, they will still reserve a liberty of after debates; and the finall determination of every controversie must be by a juridicall sentence of their own, as the Bishops who though they allowed of Appeales, yet brough back all to their own Courts at last.

5. *In the choice of Elders, they will seek approbation from godly Ministers of our Churches*; but unless our Ministers be judged godly by them, they intēd to exclude them & herein if they will void their election upon these Ministers dissent, they say something: but otherwise it is but a complement to get countenance from neighbour Churches, when it may be had, to their proceedings, and when not to be had, to neglect it.

6. *In an Ordinatio they will desire the presence and approbation of our Elders with their own.* It would please them to

have our presence justify and allow their practise: but they will not permit us to concur with them in the act of ordaining: they will not receive Ordination from our Elderships, though they have none of their own: & with them any two Elders, though neither of them be a Minister of the word, make a sufficient Presbytery to this or other purposes. And indeed they look on Ordination but as accidentall to the calling of a Minister, and place the essence of it in the peoples choice and acceptance.

7. *In cases of mal-administration, or neglect, when scandall is taken by our Churches, they will give an account to them as to sister Churches.* We feare there are many corrupt opinions in the members of their Churches, which they neglect to censure. And we have long professed that we are scandalized at their practice in drawing away the members of our Churches from us, and gathering Churches out of ours. And that boundlesse liberty and toleration which they do too much favour, and some of their own way plead and write for, doth justly offend us. Yet we have not hitherto been so respected, as Churches of God, unto whom offence ought not to be given; we would gladly, to use our brethrens phrase, receive some account of these things.

8. *For the sentence of non-communion,* we do not well understand it, nor the grounds out of Scripture for it. We know not how a power to inflict by way of sentence, an heavy punishment, by vertue of a divine Ordinance, to humble and reduce, can be severed from al kind of jurisdiction; If our brethren would cleerly state and prove this point, it might haply afford some further light towards an Accommodation instead of a Toleration.

To the second Reason:

In their Answer to our second Reason they tell us in the first Paragraph, *That this reason is founded upon this supposition, that nothing ought to be tolerated which is unlawfull in the judgement of those who are to tolerate. And if so, then by*

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the like reason, no State, Assembly, Presbytery, is to tolerate any practice or opinion which they account to be in the least erroneous.

We deny this affirmation: our Reason is not founded upon the supposition that nothing unlawfull may be tolerated: but upon the supposition of unlawfulnesse to tolerate the gathering of Churches out of true Churches. And they do not once endeavour to prove either that such gathering, or the tolerating thereof is lawfull.

Next they say, *The way we are to go is not to dispute what is unlawfull or lawfull in it selfe: because we are upon the point of forbearance in what is thought unlawfull.*

We answer. 1. This is not the first time our Brethren have waved the dispute of the lawfulnesse of their Church-gathering; upon severall occasions, it hath been pressed on them in the Assembly, but they have hitherto declined it. 2. We are here to debate the lawfulnes of forbearance, and may insist upon any proper medium to that end: for clearing whereof, the lawfulnesse or unlawfulnesse of that point of Church-gathering is one of the most necessary. 3. We conceive that to judge aright of the lawfulnes or unlawfulnesse of forbearance, will necessarily lead us to consider the lawfulnesse or unlawfulnesse of the thing in it selfe, which is to be tolerated; there are great degrees of danger or mischief in things unlawfull, some are more inconsistent with piety, truth, or peace in the Church then others, and consequently lesse tolerable in the nature of the thing then others.

In their third Paragraph they say, for that adddition, [*Out of such true Churches as are endeavouring to reforme,*] we say, *The Reformation which the Assembly hath ultimately pitched upon, satisfies not our consciences as our Brethren know.*

We answer. 1. That our brethren had such gathered Churches before any ultimate Resolution of the Assembly

was known, or in being. 2. What the Assembly hath done, in great measure doth satisfy our brethren; why else professe they so great an agreement with the rule in most things, and those most substantiall? 3. If our brethren had brought in their modell of Government as was ordered *April* 4. the Assembly would have embraced any light they should have found therein, and consequently have proceeded unto further resolutions consonant thereunto. 4. The wisdome of the honourable houses, may find out more for Reformation then haply the Assembly have advised, or themselves as yet concluded. We have set our selves no bounds but the word of God, and example of the best Reformed Churches, and therefore we are still Reforming, and separation is the more inexcusable.

In their fourth Paragraph they thus go on. For that addition [*That there is no hint of example in all the book of God for gathering Churches out of Churches*] *we shall onely at this time humbly present the nature of the thing or case it selfe as it lyes in our consciences, and as in the Assembly we also stated it. The case is this. A multitude of beleevers after all meanes used to obtaine light, to satisfie their consciences in what to them is sin in partaking of the Ordinances, as members of the Churches they live or have lived in, by which so long as they continue in those Churches they shall be debarred from these Ordinances, though it be all their dayes: and although the opinion be judged an error by those Churches they live in, yet of no higher nature then those errors for which they are not to be suspended from any Ordinance by censure, or cast out of the Church, and in all other things are such in their opinions and practices, as are meet partakers of communion with Christ in all Ordinances, which as their right, as members of his mistycall body, he hath given to them, as to their brethren. In this case there is no obligation laid by Christ either on the persons themselves for ever to continue in those Churches: or in the Churches they live in, to with-hold them from removing to other Churches, free of that*

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which would defile their consciences: or when there are no such Churches in the places they live in, to gather into Churches wherein they may injoy all Ordinances without sinne. This Assertion as thus stated, we are ready to debate when this Honourable Committee shall thinke fit.

Answ. We desire it may be noted how they wave the main businesse, whether there be any example in Gods word for gathering Churches out of Churches: we take it for granted, no instance can be given by them, because they produce none. As touching the case which they propound, we are ready to joyn in the debate, when it is stated by mutuall agreement. At present we offer these things to consideration.

1. Whether it doth not imply that every one must have a liberty allowed him in the right of his being a member of Christ to gather a Church, or into a Church, wherein he may receive the Sacrament sutably to his own principles, which opens a gap for all Sects to challenge such a liberty as their due.

2. Whether from hence it doth not follow that an erroneous conscience doth bind a man to follow the positive prescript thereof, when indeed (though he see it not) the prescript thereof is contrary to the Rule of Gods word. For instance. If a man were of an opinion that the Sacrament ought to be received at night time, and after his ordinary supper, and could not joyn in communion with any Church which should observe another order, whether he were bound upon the prescript of such an erroneous conscience, to separate from all Churches where the Ordinance was in truth rightly administred, and to gather into a Church where he might communicate according to the error of his own judgement.

3. Whether this liberty be not denyed by the Churches of *New-England*, which our brethren thinke to be the best Reformed, and had an eye unto, in taking the Covenant

(as some of them have professed) and whether we have not as just ground to deny this liberty as they.

To the third Reason they thus answer.

An exception doth not make void a Rule; especially such an one as is not founded on a Jus Divinum, *and where it is in the power of these who make the Rule to grant a forbearance from it. The Reformed Churches grant a forbearance, and yet their generall rule stands, and we in our desires do submit to this Honourable Committee to find out such wayes as may best stand with the peace of the Kingdome.*

We answer, 1. An exception limited and restrained in the extent of it, doth not void the rule in all other cases unto which those limits do not extend; but an exception may be of so great a latitude, as by consequence and virtually it may void the rule; and of that nature we conceive this exemption which our Brethren desire, to be; for it doth actually evacuate it to all such as are for the present of their judgement, and it doth the same potentially unto all such who for the future may be drawn unto the same judgement, or any other way to scruple the established rule in any branch of it, which we have cause to fear, if once tolerated, will be no smal number, seeing themselves tell us that Multitudes are of this mind already, before they have had the wing of toleration to protect them; He that leaves open one wide gap in a ground at which any cattell that will may go out, doth make void the use of the hedge, which is other wise round about it, unto that purpose of keeping them in.

2. Whether the rule be founded on a *jus divinum* or no, is not our question, though if we would speake *ad hominem*, we conceive our Brethrens principles would not allow them to agree in most things, and those the most substantiall of the rule, if there were no divine right in their judgement to found the rule in those particulars upon; but we finde our Brethren

Brethren very willing to insist on and winde in that notion on every occasion; we will not busie our thoughts in conjecturing the reasons of it; but surely it is not in this place of such speciall use as they pretend; for a rule founded on a *jus divinum positivum* is no more voided by an exception then a rule not founded on a *jus divinum.*

3. Nor is it our question, whether they who make a rule, may not grant a forbearance: but whether a forbearance may not be of such a latitude as in effect to disannull the rule; if this be our Brethrens meaning, that an exception will not void a rule, when those who make the rule, make the exception likewise, because it may be presumed that the same power will not by an act of favor evacuate a rule of Government, which it selfe hath set up; we are of the same perswasion, which makes us humbly suggest that such a forbearance as is desired, is of this nature, and therefore not to be granted.

4. We cannot but much question whether any reformed Churches grant such an unlimited toleration as our Brethren desire; that it may be free and lawfull for any Multitudes of men even of their own natives, who are under a rule, to dispute and declare against it, that it is but a rule set up by humane power, and that there is another rule, appointed by a divine law different from it, unto which men ought to submit, rather then unto the other, and by such arguments to draw as many as can be possessed with so deep a prejudice from the rule established, into separated Churches, & such separation to be unto as many as please, as well native as forraigners, as lawfull by a toleration, as the rule it selfe is by a constitution, and all this done by the advice of those Churches themselves; we thinke our Brethren cannot finde many reformed Churches that tolerate separation at all, nor any one that doth it in so unlimited a manner, and that not by connivence onely, but by a law.

To the fourth reason they thus answer, *The priviledge of those*

those Ministers who submit to the rule is to be capable of all Ecclesiasticall preferments, which we are not; they find no need of indulging to their consciences as touching the rule established, which wee do; possibly their consciences may be scrupled in the same or other things hereafter, and they have the priviledge of the same addresses for reliefe we have; and as for the two particulars therein expressed, we say first, it is a priviledge, and much to be desired, to dwell neere together, and we also shall endeavour it as much as may be for mutuall edification. Secondly, it is the right of every man (we humbly conceive) to choose his own Minister, whereas Parishes and their bounds by dwellings are but of civill right, provided the State be pleased to take some order that it may be knowne whether every man doth resort.

We answer, 1. Our Brethren mistake us; we speake of the priviledges of the people; they understand us, as if we meant Ministers and their adventages.

2. Admit this particular priviledge were true, yet our reason may be good, that in other things their priviledges would be more.

3. We know no Eccleſiasticall preferment but employment and maintenance, and whether our Brethren enjoy not these as well as other Ministers, we leave to be considered.

4. It is possible as our Brethren say, that others may be scrupled in other things hereafter, as they are in these now, and then they have the priviledge of the same addresse for reliefe which now they have; we much doubt this inference, except our Brethren would have any scruple whatsoever, which may possibly arise in any mens consciences, to be a just ground.

5. The endeavor, which our Brethren promise, *to have their Members live together as much as may be*, will indeed be as much as comes to nothing, considering what they next say, that it is the right of every man to chuse his own Minister, which assertion of theirs we will not dispute, but certainly some

some would deny, and it will be like to breed much confusion, and render that, extreme difficult, if not altogether impossible, which they propound as the onely remedy for the Magistrate to take account of the people whither they resort to heare.

But granting this assertion, it doth not take away our reason; for, suppose it be the peoples right to chose their Minister, then this is the priviledge of those which have the toleration, they shall enjoy their right absolutely, which those who are under the rule cannot do without removing their dwellings.

To the fift reason they thus answer; *What hurt the abuse of words, and amongst others this of Schisme hath done in the Churches, our Brethren know, and we all have felt; wherefore seeing as yet the Assembly hath not debated, nor the State determined what Schisme is, we desire our Brethren that in the seeking to countenance that way which they think is right, they would not seek to cast an odium upon their Brethren who differ from them, and yet together with them desire in faithfulnes to know and obey the minde of Christ, by fastning such a name upon them, or their way.*

Whereunto we reply, that had the word Schisme been left out, the reason would have remained strong, *viz.* that this would give countenance to a perpetuall division in the Church, still drawing away from the Churches under the rule: and yet to that (as being manifest in it selfe) they offer no answer at all, but fastning on the word Schisme labour to divert the *odium* thereof, which yet in the originall sense thereof differs no more from division, then Greek from Latine in expressing the same thing.

That the abuse of words hath done much hurt, we willingly grant, but that may be, as well by calling evill good, as by calling good evill; So the Papists abuse words, not only by fastning on the Orthodox the name of Heretiques, but

by assuming to themselves the name of Catholiques; and therefore as we shall be tender in this point towards our Brethren, so we desire them, that by assuming the name of tenderneſſe of conſcience to their diſſenting from the rule, or of a Churchway or Churchorder, to their way and godly party, they would not reflect an *odium* upon us or the Churches under the rule.

And although the Aſſembly have not debated, nor the State determined what Schiſme is, any otherwiſe then the declaring of what is *rectum*, is the declaring of that which is *obliquum*; yet both have covenanted to endeavor the extirpation of Schiſme, and ſo are bound to give no countenance unto any juſt occaſion thereof.

And however the Government which the Aſſembly hath adviſed, & the State already in part eſtabliſhed, hath had a ſufficient load of *odium* and aſperſions caſt upon it by ſome who would thereby gain reputation to their own way in ſo doing, yet we conceive it both unworthy to ſeek countenance unto that which we think right, by caſting *odium* on our Brethren, who differ from us, and yet together with us deſire in faithfulnes to know and obey the mind of *Chriſt*, and that the cauſe it ſelfe needs no ſuch artifices to gain countenance to it, which hath appear'd, & we hope ſhall further appear ſo agreeable to the word, & warranted by it, that there will be left no juſt cauſe of ſeparating from communion with us therein; & our Brethren know that to give countenance to an unjuſt and cauſeleſſe ſeparation from lawfull Church communion, is not farre from giving countenance to a Schiſme, eſpecially when the grounds upon which this ſeparation is deſired, are ſuch, as upon which all other poſſible Scruples with erring conſciences may in any other caſes be ſubject unto, may clame the priviledge of alike indulgence, & ſo this toleration being the firſt, ſhal indeed but lay the foundation, and open the gap, whereat as many diviſions in the Church as there may be ſcruples in the mindes of men, ſhall upon the ſelf ſame equity be let in.

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Our Brethren go on in their answer thus; *What we desire forbearance in, will countenance onely this, when men who give good testimony of their godlinesse and peaceablenesse, after all meanes used in faithfulnesse to know the minde of* Christ, *they yet cannot without sin to them enjoy all the ordinances of* Christ, *and partake in all the duties of worship as Members of that Congregation where their dwelling is, they therefore in humility and meeknesse desire they may not live without ordinances, but for the enjoyment of them for their edification in their spirituall good, may joyne in another Congregation; yet so as not condemning those Churches they joyn not with, as false, but still preserving all Christian communion with the Saints as Members of the same Body of* Christ, *of the Church Catholique, and joyn also with them in all duties of worship which belong to particular Churches so farre as they are able, if this be called Schisme, or countenance of Schisme, it is more then yet we have learned either from the Scriptures or any approved Authors.*

We answer, The desired forbearance, which as they say, will countenance *onely this*, is a perpetuall division in the Church, and a perpetuall drawing away from the Churches under the rule; for they desire that they may have liberty to have Congregations of persons gathered out of Churches under the rule, and that not only for themselves, but for all who are of their way, (and indeed upon the latitude of their grounds, for all who are, or may be of any other way, being so & so qualified,) & that not for a time, but for perpetuity; and *onely this* is a sufficient reason, why their desire cannot be granted to them *in terminis*; but to shew the justnes of this desire of theirs, *They first put a case, and then conclude, if this be called Schisme or countenance of Schisme, it is more then yet we have learned from the Scriptures or any approved Authors.*

Whereunto we answer, 1. in generall, That the putting of cases is an usuall way of slipping out from the force of a reason, when no other answer can be given; and we desire our Brethren to give us their judgement upon their owne case

propounded, as the face of it may be shewen in another glasse, suppose some Members of their own Congregations have such scruples as that they cannot without sinne to them enjoy all the ordinances of Christ, and partake in all the duties of worship as Members, as namely, they cannot allow the Baptizing of infants, and therefore that they may not live without ordinances, do separate into another Congregation, and then again some Members of that separated Congregation, shall so scruple some other particular doctrine or practice, that they cannot without sin to them (as they conceive) enjoy all the ordinances of *Christ*, or partake in all duties of worship as Members, and so shall yet joyn with them in another Congregation which concurs with them in their present principles, are these divisions and subdivisions as lawfull as they may be infinite? or must we give that respect to the error of mens consciences, as to satisfie their scruples by allowance of this liberty to them? & doth not this proclaime an universall liberty to all unto whom the limitations in the case may belong? and doth it not plainly signifie that error of conscience is a protection against Schisme? But we come to examine the case particularly.

1. They give the qualification of the persons for whom the forbearance is desired, *They are men who give good testimony of their godlines and peaceablenes after all meanes used in faithfulnes to know the minde of* Christ.

We shall not minde our Brethren how testimonies of godlines are not alwayes infallible protections either against Schisme or Heresie, least it should be judged a casting of *odium* to tell them that men who have been not only esteemed the authors of Schisme in the ancient Churches, have had great testimony of their strictnesse and integrity of life, as *Meletius*, *Lucifer*, *Audaus*; but even such as have been condemned justly by the ancient councels for Heresie; our brethren know what testimony in this respect hath been given by *Cyril* of *Alexandria* to *Nestorius*, and by *Augustine* to *Pelagius*.

gion. But we desire to know unto whom this testimony shall be given: and what assurance may be had that all they whom the brethren or others of their way shall gather into their congregations, whether Ministers or others, have used all meanes, yea all meanes in faithfulnesse to know the mind of Christ. May we not suggest to our brethren one means which hath been earnestly desired, and that many yeares, and never yet to this day by them attempted, namely a free and cleere setting forth of their whole way and grounds out of Scripture for it, unto their brethren: by which meanes, either the weaknesse of their Reasons might have been so fully discovered, as that thereby they might have been moved to forsake this way, and continue in communion with us: or they might have discovered so much light unto us, beyond what hath upon any search of our own yet appeared, as that the rule might have been framed unto a generall content? Or who shall keep the doore of this forbearance being once set open, to prevent the entrance of such as are not in this manner qualified? especially considering that the grant of Toleration to all which will make use of it, is like to take off many from seeking satisfaction in their scruples, and using all meanes in faithfulnesse to know the mind of Christ, if they may without due tryall betake themselves immediately to the indulgence. And so the Toleration may become a Sanctuary for such of our Churches to fly unto at pleasure from the government, upon such ends as are not at all conscientious, but carnall and corrupt; we therefore conceive it necessary for preventing manifold inconveniences, that amongst all other means used in faithfulnesse, this be one, that each person give account of his Scruples to the Eldership or Congregation where he dwels, that so he may either receive satisfaction or have from them a testimony of godlinesse and peaceablenesse.

2. They propound the case of persons thus qualified, *They cannot without sin to them enjoy all the ordinances of* Christ,

and partake of all the duties of worship as Members of that Congregation where their dwelling is.

If they cannot in all, let them partake in as many duties and ordinances as they can, and let the indulgence onely supply that wherein they cannot, and not exempt them universally in that wherein they can; but we desire our Brethren to speak clearly and candidly, can they enjoy any one ordinance, or partake in any one duty in our Congregations as Members of them? we shall be glad to heare from our Brethren, that they can be Members of that Congregation where their dwelling is, If otherwise, to say they cannot partake in all, or enjoy all, is but concealedly spoken, since in truth they will partake in none at all as Members.

3. They therefore desire, *They may not live without ordinances, but for the enjoyment of them for their edification in their spirituall good they may joyne in another Congregation.*

This desire, of joyning in another Congregation, is but *petitio principii*, and no answer to our reason against it; and whereas they say they must live without ordinances if they joyne with us as Members in our Congregations, 1. This implication is very aspersive, it being said indefinitely without ordinances, 2. It will not follow upon their own confession; for they confesse, they can occasionally joyn with us without sin, and if the occasionall joyning be lawfull, we cannot see why the constant should be sinfull. 3. When they say they cannot enjoy ordinances without sin, if this sin be founded upon an error of conscience, as we are perswaded it is, our Brethren know that an erroneous conscience can so hamper and perplex a man, as that during such an error, he shall be bound under sin every way, whether he crosse the dictate of his conscience, or follow it; in which case further meanes and inquiry is to be used how to extricate the conscience out of these straites, and the person erring is bound so put away such an error, as being a sinfull infirmity, and the Church no way bound

to

to indulge a liberty of persisting in it; especially to the evident disturbance of her own peace.

2. They propound certaine limitations in the case; yet so say they, *as not condemning those Churches they joyn not with as false, but still preserving all Christian Communion with the Saints as Members of the same body of* Christ *of the Church Catholique, and joyn with them in all duties of worship that belong to particular Churches so far as they are able.*

We answer, 1. What ever indulgence shall be granted, let this be the boundary of it which is given by the Brethren themselves; that such as give not testimony of their godlinesse and peaceablenesse, as have not used all meanes in faithfulnesse to know the minde of *Christ*, as do not condemne those Churches which they joyn not with as false, as do not preserve all Christian Communion with the Saints, nor joyn with them in all duties of worship that belong to particular Churches, as far as they are able, shall not have the benefit of this indulgence; and to the end that those words, *so far as they are able*, may not stand for a meer cypher, and signify nothing, let each man particularly declare in what ordinances or duties they are able to joyn, that so all totall separation may be prevented.

2. The not condemning of our Chruches as false, doth little extenuate the separation; for divers of the Brownists who have totally separated in former times, have not condemned these Churches as false; though they do not pronounce an affirmative judgement against us, yet the very separating is a tacite and practicall condemning of our Churches, if not false, yet as impure, *consq.* as that in such administrations they cannot be by them as Members communicated with without sin.

3. As touching that expression of *preserving all Christian Communion with the Saints, as Members of the same body of* Christ, it is no vindication of our Churches at all when they depart from us the same may be said of any Saints living

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in *Sodome*, in *Cæsars* houshold, *in facie Romuli*, in false Churches: we do not find our Brethren willing to have communion with the Saints as Members of our Congregations, but as Members of the Church Catholique, which is as full a declining of communion with us as Churches, as if we were false Churches.

4. And whereas our Brethren say, *that the forbearance they desire will countenance only this*, which is speciously represented with all favourable circumstances in the case: we conceive under favour, that the desire of theirs in their third proposition goes somewhat further; for there they desire a liberty to have Congregations which themselves have explained to be, to hold those Congregations they already have, or to gather Members into a Congregation, or to adde to those they have already; now it is one thing for a scrupulous conscience to have liberty to joyn in another Congregation, as it is said in the case, and another thing to have liberty to be active, and to gather Members out of our Churches, as is implied in the desire; for that would be to desire not only a liberty for consciences that are scrupulous, but a liberty to make consciences scrupulous by preaching or any other way infusing their principles into them, in order to the gaining of them into their Congregations; nor can we yet see how our Brethren, looking on their way as the counsell of God, and on the rule, as not founded on divine right, can allow themselves not to be in this manner active and sedulous to promote that which they judge Gods way, and to disparage that which they judge but mans.

The Brethren having framed a case which is lesse then their desire in the third proposition, (and yet we feare, will not be the case of many who will make use of this indulgence,) conclude thus, *If this be called Schisme or countenance of Schisme, it is more then yet we have learned either from the Scripture, or any approved Author.*

We answer, That it is not this new formed case, but the

the granting of our Brethrens deſire, in the third propoſition as it ſtands in *terminis*, whereof we ſay that it would give countenance to a perpetuall Schiſme and diviſion in the Church, which we do ſtill averre is a thing of it ſelf manifeſt; not that we think differences in judgement in this or that point to be Schiſme, or that every inconformity unto every thing uſed or injoyned is Schiſme, ſo that communion be preſerved, or that ſeparation from idolatrous communion or worſhip *ex ſe* unlawfull, is Schiſme; but

1. We finde our Brethren deſire not onely that they may be free from communicating as Members in thoſe Pariſhes where they dwell, but may have liberty to have Congregations of ſuch perſons who out of tenderneſs of conſcience cannot communicate with us, but do voluntarily offer themſelves to joyne in ſeparate Congregations of another communion, which ſeceſſion of our Members from us is a manifeſt rupture of our ſocieties into others, and is therefore a Schiſme in the body; and if the Apoſtle do call thoſe *diviſions of the Church*, wherein Chriſtians did not ſeparate into diverſe formed Congregations of ſeverall communion in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, Schiſmes, much more may ſuch ſeparation as this deſired be ſo called. 1 Cor. 1. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 11, 18.

2. We finde it not alleaged as a cauſe of this ſeparation, either that our Churches are falſe, or our communion in ordinances *ex ſe* unlawfull, but onely *ſcruple of conſcience, that a man cannot without ſin as to him, partake in all duties, and enjoy all ordinances*, which is no cauſe of ſeparating, nor doth it take off cauſeleſſe ſeparation from being Schiſme, which may ariſe from errors of conſcience as well as carnall and corrupt reaſons; therefore we conceive the cauſes of ſeparation muſt be ſhewen to be ſuch as *ex natura rei* will beare it out, which hath not yet been done by our Brethren, nor we think can be, and therefore we ſay that the granting of the liberty deſired will give countenance to Schiſme.

3. We cannot but take it for granted upon evidence of reason and experience of all ages, that this separation will be the mother and nurse of contentions, strifes, envyings, confusions, and so draw with it that breach of love, which may endanger the heightning of it into formall schisme even in the sense of our Brethren.

And we desire our Brethren to shew out of Scriptures and approved Authors what they have learned concerning schisme; for the breaking of Members from their Churches which are lawfully constituted Churches, and from communion in ordinances dispensed according to the word, without just and sufficient cause *ex natura rei* to justify such secession, and to joyne in other Congregations of separate communion, either because of personall failings in the Officers or Members of the Congregation from which they separate, or because of causelesse scruple of their own conscience, hath been accounted schisme, and the setting up *altare contra altare*, as the expression of former times was; and what is it else that approved Authors do call Schisme? *Schisma, ni fallor* (saith *Augustine*) *est eadem opinantem, & eodem ritu utentem solo Congregationis delectari dissidio, & Schismaticos facit non diversa fides, sed communionis disrupta societas.* Agreeable whereunto is that definition of schisme by *Cameron*, *est schisma secessio in religionis negotio vel temeraria, vel injusta, sive facta sit, sive continuata*, and concurrently do other approved Authors say, and we likewise conceive, that it is the cause of the separation from communion which gives both name and nature to schisme; for if that cause be unjust or insufficient according to the rule of the word of God, let our Brethren tell us what such a separation is.

Contra Faustum, lib. 20. cap. 3. Qu. Evang. in Math. qu. 11. & de fide & operib. cap. 5. De Schismate.

In their 3. paragraph our Brethren proceed, *And as for that irritation our Brethren speake of, we humbly conceive it will be according to the temper of mens hearts; if such a practice meet with men whose hearts are gracious, it will onely irritate them*

them to search further into the minde of Christ, *and to walke before their Brethren with more exactneſs, and to exerciſe love, meekneſs and forbearance towards thoſe Brethren who differ from them; and ſuch irritation there is no great cauſe that either we or our Brethren ſhould make complaints of: If &c.*

Anſwer. We know no evill which may not be excuſed by ſuch a dilemma as this; what ſcandall, what hereſie can ariſe, which will not operate upon men according to the temper of their hearts? which will not irritate thoſe who are gracious to ſearch the Scriptures? &c. for even *Hereſies* ſaith the Apoſtle, muſt be, *that they who are approved may be made manifeſt*; *we may not do evill*, nor plead for evill, nor take it for granted that a thing is not evill, *becauſe good may come of it.*

If this liberty, ſay they, *meet with corruption, it is like enough there may be accidentally an irritation to ſin; but the way then to oppoſe ſuch corruption is by inſtruction, prayer, walking convincingly before them, & if they grow turbulent, to call in the help of the Civill Magiſtrate; but not to give that reſpect to their corruptions, as to deny to men who give undeniable teſtimony of their godlineſſe, that uſe of the ordinances of* Christ *that they may with the peace of their conſciences enjoy.*

Anſwer, The irritation is not accidentall where the cauſe is *cauſa per ſe*; we cannot conceive that this irritation will be *extra ſemper & frequenter*, as accidentall effects are; for to omit the corruptions which this liberty may meet with in ſuch as are not truly godly, will not this be an irritation of their corruptions that are true Members of the Church? yea haply not onely of their corruptions, but of their conſciences and zeale to oppoſe ſuch ſeparation and drawing away of their Members as this is; the *Corinthians* were Saints, and yet by reaſon of the Schiſmes, contentions, and ſtrife amongſt them, they are charged to be yet carnall, and to walke as men; and if we conſult our own experience already, this liberty meets with more whoſe

corruptions are too strong for their graces, then whose graces do make onely good use thereof; and because we already finde this assumed liberty to be an irritation to the worse, and not to the better, we have little reason to expect that being made more confident and bold by a toleration, it should be otherwise hereafter; nor do we thinke but such separation of Church-Members hath been heretofore, and therefore may further be an irritation of corruptions amongst themselves.

To the way they suggest of opposing such corruptions, however it may be good to prevent the evill effects it may have upon a mans owne heart; yet so long as the cause of all doth remaine, which is separation, and so long as men are men, we cannot conceive it will be otherwise, nor can we find in any age or history, but the like cause hath had the like effects; and though we acknowledge the Magistrates power to bridle turbulency, and to prevent or heale the breach of peace, yet the irritations will remaine, and be often breaking forth to the scandall of religion; and the trouble of the Magistrate is not likely to be so great in taking away the fuell, as in coming alwayes in to poure water upon the fire when it breakes out.

And as to that which they say, *That such respect is not to be given to mens corruptions as to deny &c.* This implication is scandalous, that the denying of this liberty is a giving respect to mens corruptions; for it is out of respect to the Churches peace and communion, and the covenanted uniformity; and yet doubtlesse though we may not give respect, yet we may have respect to mens corruptions so far as to prevent the irritation of them; else by this reason we must hand over head grant an universall toleration of all that are any way conscienciously scrupled, without looking to the probable events and consequences thereof, which may follow either by reason of the corruptions of others, or of the men themselves who use this liberty; for it may be

be as well indulged with respect to mens corruptions, as denyed, except it can be undertaken that there shall be no corruption in them that desire and use it; It is our earnest desire and prayer that our Brethren might enjoy the ordinances with the peace of their consciences, and of the Church also, or that they would rather deny themselves of their full liberty in every point, then redeeme it at the price of so much danger and disquiet to the Churches of God.

To the sixth reason our Brethren answer,

First in generall our judgements do thus farre agree with yours that except upon very weighty considerations, husband and wife, master and servants should partake together in the same Ministry.

We take what they grant us, and cannot but thinke it strange that when our Brethren account us true Churches, agree with us in substance of doctrine and worship, in the most, and most substantiall things of the rule for government, can occasionally joyne with us in the Sacraments, can hear with us and pray with us, there should yet be such weighty considerations behind (though they call the difference betwixt us, *Lesser matters*) as to necessitate separation, and to ground an allowance for wife, childe, servant, to withdraw from that authority, which the master of the family hath to rule and oversee them in religious duties; but they proceed.

2. *If it should happen to be otherwise,* 1. *All manner of confusion would not hereby be introduced into families; for can our Brethren think that persons agreeing in all the fundamentals of their faith, and who in their judgement and practice joyn in all the same duties of piety in the family, and also agree in the same duties of publick worship for the substance, though not living under the same individuall ministry, yet unlesse they do agree also in an uniformity in every thing, both publike and*

private, they must needs run into all manner of confusion: hath either nature or the gospell put such a necessity upon uniformity in lesser things to keep families from confusion? If this were the rule of the gospell, then except it prevaile upon the opinion of those whom it converts to such an uniformity (which it seldome doth) it must by this principle of necessity subvert humane societyes by bringing confusion into families, which we conceive to be a great derogation to the gospell.

Hereunto we answer, 1. The common people are not very likely from agreement in fundamentals, to draw consequences of mutuall forbearance, when they see Ministers, notwithstanding this, for these lesser matters, to withdraw & set up separate Churches, unto which they following them upon opinion of sin, and that in the worship of God, which is heightned with the notion of *Wil-Worship, and even of Idolatry and Antichristianisme*, must needs greatly endanger heavy contentions and confusion: no animosities being so great as those which rise out of differences in religion, specially amongst those that live neer together.

Nor is it the meer want of uniformity (as our Brethren would inferre) which doth necessitate this, but such a positive diformity in opinion and practice, as that they who live together, and lie in the bosomes of one another, *cannot* (which is more then simply *do not*) serve God together in publick, but divide asunder, not unto a severall ministry onely, but which is much more dangerous, unto a separated ministry, wherein so often as the doctrines which tend to justifie that separation shall be taught on the one side, and the contrary thereunto on the other, it is impossible for a family thus contrarily in the Members thereof instructed, to joyn together in mutuall edification at home, without confusion.

2. If any differences in a family should arise, especially growing out of divided opinions in this matter of a Church way, as is most probable may, and that frequently, and such

such as may breake forth into publick scandal, and require the care of Ministers and Eldership to heale them, whither can they repaire in such a case for helpe, whose very disagreements are about the remedies that should cure them?

3. Where husband and wife are divided into separated Congregations, they will certainly endeavour to draw children and servants to their way, whence favors and disfavors are likely to grow, and thereupon such jarrs and contentions in the family, as may quickly amount to much confusion.

4. The very severall contributions unto the maintenance of severall Ministers, when a man must to his own Minister, to his wives, to his childrens, as they severally shall scatter themselves, contribute, may not onely be a burden to the state of a man, but much more to his minde, when being perswaded his wife or children are in a sin of separation from him, he must yet be at charges to allow them therein; differences that strike this string, do often beget jarring discords, to say nothing of the bad uses, which ill mindes, or the many feares, which jealous mindes may draw from hence, when young women or children shall constantly depart for the ordinances, it may be some miles from one another, out of the sight, and from under the inspection and care of their parents or husbands, when it is certain they should enjoy as powerfull and edifying a ministry by staying at home.

Lastly, if a wife or child should be censured in their separated Congregations, that also might be a rise of domesticall contentions. In his own Congregation the husband should hear and understand the case, and have satisfaction in the known integrity of his own Eldership, or at least might have the benefit of an appeal, none of which he can have in a separated Congregation of which he hath no knowledge.

2. *Neither would it* (say our Brethren) *exceedingly, much lesse*

leſſe altogether hinder the mutuall edification that might be afforded and received amongſt them; for firſt although perſons of the ſame family not living under the ſame miniſtry, may in ſome reſpect of family-duties not ſo fully edifie as otherwiſe, yet in a great meaſure they may, and if there be a zeale and good conſcience in any of the family to be helpfull in good conference, it is no ſuch great hinderance to hear in ſeverall places, or ſeverall Preachers, as ſchollers reading ſeverall books & then conferring; many good Chriſtians have for edification purpoſely practiſed it, and it hath ſome advantages for edification which the other way hath not.

Anſwer, Our Brethren grant that this courſe hindereth ſuch full edification in ſome reſpect, as might otherwiſe be had; and ſurely this ſome reſpect is a very great one, when there ſhall be none to help the memories, to clear the doubts, to remove the miſtakes, to ſupply the defects of the reſt, none to inculcate the duties, to kindle and mutually warme the affections, or to whet the things which might joyntly have been learned, upon the conſciences of one another, and having been more joyntly affected in the publique diſpenſation of them, to be the better enabled with joynt fervency of ſpirit to begge a bleſſing upon them; and verily when we are commanded to do all things unto edification, and to follow thoſe things whereby one may edify another; if any courſe be more a hinderance then a furtherance unto edification, we know not how upon principles of conſcience a man ſhould conſtantly be bound unto ſuch a courſe; Schollers may better profit by conferring their obſervations out of ſeverall books, then ordinary people by bringing broken, and it may be miſtaken and incoherent notes from ſeverall ſermons; in that of ſchollers there is nothing but ſpeculative or intellectuall benefit aymed at; here the heart, conſcience, affections are to be kindled, and further quickned by mutuall conference, and aſſiſtance in the duties they heard before, which is more

more effectually done when severall persons have been joyntly warned and stirred up in the same Congregation; besides books in that case may agree, when in our case, sermons may not; for one may hear a sermon for separation, another for communion, and so conferring of notes will be but the repeating of contradictions in the family; and though some in the family may have zeale and good conscience to helpe the rest, yet what will this availe those whose understandings and memories being weak have none to improve and further them in the things which they heard themselves? we are confident, no humble Christians who know their own weaknesse, and are tender of the weaknesse of others, will dare to pretend their getting advantage in matter of edification from the ordinances by thus constant dividing and scattering the family into severall Congregations; and therefore our Brethren do confesse that there is a further degree of edification which comes to persons in a family by going all to the same ministry;

But then they further proceed and say,

2: *That this amounts not to that proportion as to countervaile the want of enjoying the publick ordinances for ever; which compared with family duties simply considered have had the preeminence; both in respect to Gods glory, and the edification of souls, in all mens concessions, which cannot be enjoyed by many that yet are truly conscientious, except the liberty petitioned be granted.*

Answer. What ordinances must our Brethren want for ever? they have told us they could not joyn in some ordinances without sin; here they speak plainer, and if that they say be pertinent to the argument, they tell us they cannot enjoy the ministry of the word without sin in our Congregations; for if they can, and if by their own confession there is a further degree of edification by going all of a family to the same ministry, then by dividing, with what warrant do they divide, in that wherein they can joyn,

even to the prejudice of edification? They have told us before, they can hear our Ministers, and allow them to preach amongst them as Ministers, and occasionally receive the Lords Supper with us, and admit us with them; and if all this may be without sin, must yet the toleration desired be upon this ground granted, because else many truly conscientious must want the publick ordinances, & that for ever; we understand neither the Logick, nor Divinity of this answer.

We confesse to family duties simply considered, publick ordinances are to be preferred; but if one must be lost for the other, we think that which is *ens per se* of such an inconvenience, to wit, such a separation, is even *in nimice* unjust.

3. They adde, *for the governours in great families are to take off all in their families attending upon the ordinances and of their profiting thereby.* We answer, *in the Churches we desire being constant and fixed, it is no more impossible then it is for a godly tutor in the university to take account of his pupils having liberty to go to several Churches.*

To which we reply; The case is different; schollers can write, and give a ready account; every childe or servant in a family cannot do so, nor be by the governor helped who heard not with him. 2. Schollers sometimes have deceived their tutors with false notes, and so may children or servants; what security is or can there be that they will go constantly to their congregation, and not to tavernes, alehouses, or some other ill employment? 2. What time will there be for receiving an account of so many sermons? Add hereto the different hours of going and returning, which may exceedingly hinder family duties; none of which inconveniences will be remedied by the fixedness of the separated Churches.

4. They say, *Where as it is objected, the variety of our families may possibly be of twenty Churches, we suppose if the*

State be pleased to grant us the liberty we petition for, that they in their wisedome (to which we have referred our selves) will take into consideration the limiting such Congregations unto a certain number, and there may not then be twenty Churches in any City or Towne to divide themselves into.

To this we answer, that it is true according to the judgement of our Brethren who make those many thousands of Christians which were converted at *Jerusalem*, to have been no argument of more then one Congregation in that City, that conformably thereunto a very few Congregations may serve to gather a great multitude of Members; but we know not how the principles and grounds of our Brethrens desire can allow them to rest in any set number, if they prove too few for such Multitudes as they may gather out of our Churches into them; for their petition being indefinite for multitudes of persons, cannot be well definite for number of places or Congregations; but whether they be more or fewer, they will be abundantly enough to distract even a very great family and hinder their mutuall edification, and the taking and giving of a sure and profitable account; to the great greife of the husband, parent, and governor, to have his family so authorized to forsake him, and that he, (to adde that to all the other considerations) who for his own benefit would be glad of their help, must want that, as well as they want his.

Our Brethren conclude their answer thus; *But the truth is, those that thus plead against this permission which we desire as insufferable, must certainly suppose that men are to be tied throughout this Kingdome to their own Parish Churches where they live; both masters and servants, and that not onely for Sacraments, but for constant hearing; which how burdensome it was in former times, the godly people are very sensible of; and now in the time of reformation, it findes many Ministers who cannot be cast out by order of law, though bad and unprofitable, as appears by the leaving them out of the Classes; and shall*

the people be tyed to live under them as their Ministers, who are not worthy to joyn in government with your selves? and for time to come as places are void, they must be supplied by the choice of others for them, or by themselves; if by themselves, all Parishes are not reformed as concerning the people, and the major part being generally the worst, the Ministers chosen by them, will be such as the godly cannot live under their Ministry; if by others, those who are the choosers may also be such, as they cannot be denyed by law their right in chosing, and so also unprofitable Ministers may be put upon the godly people; and if they be not tyed to their parishes the weight of this reason, and the inconveniences presented will fall more heavy upon the numerous multitude of Parishes, in City and Country.

Answer. To the pains which in this Paragraph our Brethren have taken in setting forth for the present, and prophesying for the future of the unprofitableness and unworthiness of the Ministers in many of our Parochial Congregations under which godly men cannot live, we will reply no more but this, that it a crimination which might well have been spared in a time of endeavoured and covenanted reformation; for it seemes to intimate one of these two things, either that there is an impossibility *in natura rei* for a profitable ministry to be for the time to come generally setled in our Churches, or that being possible in it selfe, there would be some defect in those by whose zeal, power and wisedome, this so important a particular of reformation should be promoted: neither of which we thinke our Brethren either will or can affirme.

Neither is it equall to argue from the former times of unjust vexation, when men were tyed to their Parishes, though there were no preaching Minister, or one who preached errors, or opposed godlinesse, unto these times wherein men have covenanted against every thing that is of this nature.

Nor do we beleeve that our Brethren meane that onely such

such should be allowed to gather into their Congregations who live under bad and unprofitable Ministers, though that be the onely *medium* here used against our reason.

But to the whole we answer in breife thus much; 1. That we never did, do, nor shall deny any Members of our Congregations to hear or communicate occasionally elsewhere. And 2. That we doubt not, but by the blessing of God upon the reformation to be setled, there will be that concurrent care of patrons, people, Classes, as that there shall be no such unworthy Ministers from whom any conscientious Christian shall be forced constantly to withdraw himself; and where the ministry is without just exception, we referre it to our Brethrens own consciences, and to the practice of their Congregations, to say how fit it is that the Members should ordinarily, much lesse constantly, seek the ordinances elsewhere.

FEB. 2. 1645.

The Committee met again, and the Dissenting Brethren brought in a Paper containing a Reply to a second Part of the Answer of the Sub-committee to the Desires of the Dissenting Brethren, Dec. 13. 1643.

Which is as followeth.

Though it is our desire rather to answer to the Papers brought in by our Brethren, before we go on any further; yet because the *Committee* requires us to go on, we humbly submit these Papers to the consideration of this Honourable *Committee*.

Our Brethren say.

II. "That none are to be allowed upon differences only in "matter of government, to withdraw Communion from "us in things wherein they declare an agreement: But see-"ing is confessed in Worship and Doctrine, we are one, "and have covenanted to endeavor the neareſt conjunction "and uniformity, there may be no such indulgence granted "to any as may constitute them in distinct separate Con-"gregations, as to these parts of worship where they can "joyn in communion with us, but only some expedient may "be indeavoured how to beare with them in the particulars, "wherein they cannot agree with us.

III. "For

III. "For this purpose we humbly offer.

1. "That such as through scruple or error of conscience, "cannot joyn to partake of the Lords Supper, shall repaire "to the Minister and Elders for satisfaction in their scruples, "which if they cannot receive, they shall not be compelled "to communicate in the Lords Supper: provided that in "all other parts of worship, they joyn with the congrega-"tion wherein they live and be under the government of "that congregation.

2. "That such as in this manner are under the govern-"ment of that congregation wherein they live, and are not "Officers therein, being of the Independent judgement, "shall seek satisfaction as in the former proposition, which if "they cannot receive, they shall not be compelled to be un-"der the power of censures from Classes or Synods: provided "that they continue under the government of that congre-"gation, and that no man who hath submitted to Classis and "Synods, shall decline them, in any case, *pendente lite*.

Answer.

1. *This supposeth what our professed judgement is and hath been against, namely, to be Members or Pastors of the Parishes as now they are; for the* Honourable Houses *think not meet as yet to give power to the Ministers by a law to purge the Congregations so farre as the Assembly it self desireth; and we have not as you know, presumed to seeke the alteration of the rule established; And the rule for purging the Parishes given up by the Assembly it self, to the* Honourable Houses, *is not onely* short, *but* exclusive *of what, we in our consciences thinke, is required by God* for the qualification of Members: *so that it is not to us in view, how the* Parishes *shall be reformed,*

to

to that which will ſatisfie our conſciences. And as the divines of the Reverend Aſſembly have ſaid, they cannot without ſin adminiſter the ordinances to the Pariſhes as they ſtand; *ſo neither can we continue or become Members or Paſtors according to our principles; and we humbly deſire that* our conſciences *may be conſidered herein for* forbearance, *as* our Brethren *deſire that theirs may for* power *by* a law.

2. *If we could. Yet according to* what is propoſed, *we muſt for ever want that great ordinance of the Lords Supper, which cannot but much prejudice us to the Elders and Members of the Congregation, from whoſe communion we thus ſeparate; and yet we muſt be under their government and cenſures thus prejudiced by us; which how unreaſonable it will be, we deſire our Brethren to conſider.*

3. *All this ſuppoſeth alſo that we are to be under the government of a Church whereof we are* not Members; *for we account not living in the Pariſhes to be ſufficient to make a Member of a Church; nor did many of you.*

4. *It ſuppoſeth* this ground (*the reaſon of which we ſee not, only the* charity *of it we cannot but wonder at*) *that becauſe we come ſo near in doctrine and worſhip and communion with you, therefore we muſt* not have *an* indulgence *in a difference which yet con-*

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turns the edification of our ſoules by ordinances that are ſo neceſſary.

"For the REASONS the Reverend Brethren do "give, That ſeeing it is confeſſed in worſhip and "doctrine we are one, and have covenanted to en"deavor the neareſt conjunction and uniformity, "there may be no ſuch indulgence granted to any "as may conſtitute them in diſtinct ſeparated "Congregations as to thoſe parts of worſhip "where they can joyn in communion with us; we ANSWER.

Whereas the uniformity *ſworn to in the* Covenant, *is now urged here upon this occaſion, and continually upon the like turned as the great argument againſt us in pulpits, preſſes, and ordinary treaties, as if what we deſired were contrary thereunto: this argument cannot hold againſt us, without affixing an interpretation upon that part of the Covenant, and* that according to our Brethrens principles only, *to the prejudice of ours; who when we tooke this Nationall Covenant were known to be of the ſame principles we now are of; and yet this Covenant, was profeſſedly ſo intempered in the firſt framing it, as that we of different judgements might take it, both parties being preſent at the framing of it in Scotland: and if this ſhould be the way of urging, it is as free for us to give* our interpretation, *of the* latitude *or* nearneſſe of uniformity *intended, as for our Brethren; we having been*

preſent at the debates of the Aſſembly alſoe in, and wel know and remember the ſenſe *that* there *was held forth thereof; And further the Aſſembly being appointed by order of the Honourable Houſe of Commons bearing date September* 15. 1643. To ſet forth in a Declaration the grounds that have induced the Aſſembly to give their opinions, that this Covenant may be taken in point of conſcience, *according to which, ſome of us were by a Committee entruſted to bring in materials to that purpoſe, and accordingly did, which materials were committed to one of us, by a* Sub-Committee *to draw up; and among many other things* that which followes, *as grounds of taking the Covenant, as touching that firſt article, viz.* That we ſhall endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdomes to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, confeſſion of faith, forme of Church-government, directory of worſhip and catechiſmy, that we and our poſterity after us, may as Brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midſt of us.

This indeavour in our places and callings, for uniformity, *we apprehended the meaning of it to be.*

That as in our ranks and ſtations we ſhould indeavour it: ſo according to thoſe generall warrants of the word, to regulate ſuch an indeavour

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in the use of means, whereby to accompliſh it. And therefore, as *for the* patterne, the word of God *is to be in our eye*: ſo, *for the* way *and meanes and progreſſe in reducing the Churches to ſuch an uniformity*, ſuch rules *are to be obſerved, as the nature of ſuch a work will beare; and which the Apoſtles* (*who had infallibility*) *obſerved in reducing the* Jewes, *and thoſe of the circumciſion, and the* Gentiles *to an uniformity; and without tyranny and preſſing mens conſcences beyond the ſeverall degrees of light, which God vouchſafes to ſeverall Churches more or leſſe. So that although there be* one patterne *in our eye in common, which all our conſciences ſwear to bring all to*; *yet* de facto *and in the providence of God, it ſo falls out, in the reforming of Churches* (*now after Anti-Chriſtianiſme hath over-ſpread and corrupted all*) *that the light growes every age more and more, to the perfect day and the coming of Chriſt, who is to melt that* man of ſinne, *by the increaſing* brightneſſe of his coming: *and ſo both of perſons and Churches ſome ſee more, ſome ſee leſſe; and as we ſee in the reformed Churches at this day; and will certainly fall out thus, in theſe of ours. Now therefore in this caſe* that rule *for effecting this uniformity muſt certainly be no other then what the Apoſtle gives,* Phil. 3.

As farre as we have attained, let us walk by the same rule. And therefore the way is to see how farre we have attained, and set down wherein we agree, (as in all substantials of faith and worship it is certain we shall) and so to walk by that same rule. And then in such matters wherein men are otherwise minded, to leave it to God and such good meanes, that God may reveal it to them in his time, as his promise is.

But if an uniformity for uniformities sake, (And so the argument of our brethren here runs) that is, affecting uniformity so much as not to regard mens consciences, should be pressed and urged by such meanes as formerly, without respect had to that variety of light, in matters of a lesser nature, this were beyond the callings and warrants of the word; and will prove a perfect tyranny; and will be so farre from being a meanes of love, which is aimed at, that it will lay the foundation of confusion and dissention as formerly it did. It is with Churches as with men and particular Saints, they are of severall Sizes and growth, of severall statures, and as men are left to be more or lesse holy, as God by good meanes shall make them, so must Churches. As it were against nature, to stretch a low man to the same length with a taller,

all, you would not all meet at the stature of one
that is there for uniformities sake: so a thing both
above reason, and above reformed Churches to a
middle stature for complyance with others, and
for meer uniformities *sake.*

And this suits as with the rules of the word,
so with the scope of the Article; For first
look what kind of uniformity *in confession of*
faith, the like in matter of worship and governe-
ment is to be intended; and that the rather be-
cause directions for government and worship
are the more remote from all Christians know-
ledge, and perhaps more obscure in the word;
and are the speciall controversies of the times.
Now as in matters of faith you would not for
uniformities sake determine all differences in judgement *but fundamentals, (and an uni-*
formity therein is all intended) so by analogie
in point of worship and government. And se-
condly, the end is that God may dwell a-mongst us, *which is the author of peace, not of*
confusion in all the Churches: which peace
(whilst in his providence mens judgements
do and will differ) will never be attained by a
rigid uniformity.

But this order of the Honourable House of Com-
mons, so necessary for the satisfaction of all differing

judgements as at first to take the Covenant, so to continue stedfast therein; and which would in all likelyhood have laid a foundation of this and other differences, was super-seded to this day.

II. *We answer, that we willingly again do professe that in the substance of worship and doctrine, we are one, and of the same judgement with our brethren, yet to practice and injoy those parts of worship, as ordinances of a Church, there is (as to our consciences) necessarily required, as the seat and subject of worship and other ordinances, a* Church-state; *and those such Churches, as where we may be members and joyn in Communion therein as members without sin, which we cannot do as we have all along professed; and such Churches, as wherein we can injoy all ordinances, which is denied us here in this Paragraph. So that the only way left to reduce us to an uniformity and conjunction in the same practices, is, to allow us such distinct Churches from yours, according to our principles,* in which *and by meanes of which, we shall hold all possible communion and conformity with yours: whereas otherwise, we shall only retain* an uniformity in judgement: *whereas* that uniformity *the Covenant much rather obligeth you and us all unto, is that which may be an uniformity* in practice *with satisfaction to all mens consciences, and their edification.*

The

March 9. 1645.

The Committe met again, and the Sub-committee presented an Answer to the last Paper of the Dissenting Brethren, which is as followeth.

The Answer of the Sub-committee of Divines unto the fourth Paper of the Dissenting Brethren, presented to the Honourable Committee.

Our Brethren being ordered by the Honourable Committe to go on upon the Paper brought in by the Sub-committee touching indulgence, are not pleased to take notice of those particulars of forbearance, which are therein offered to consideration; though this would much have conduced unto the expediting of the businesse of this Honourable Committee, and encouraged us to have studied some further meanes for their accommodation; neither do they bring in any reasons out of Scripture to justifie their desire of that which we say cannot be granted them *in terminis*. But thus they begin;

Thought it our desire, rather to answer to the Papers brought in by our Brethren, before wee go on any further; yet because the Committee requires us to go on, we humbly submit these Papers to the consideration of this Honourable Committee.

To which we answer, That before our last Papers were brought in, they were ordered by the Committee to consider of this former Paper, and had a moneths time so to have done, but have still declined it upon other reasons then they here expresse, and seeme more willing to lengthen the

work

work into tedious and fruitlesse disputes against those things which do not please them, then to expresse a reall endeavour of bringing things to an agreement so farre as may be, by so much as taking notice of those parts of our Paper, which tend thereunto; leaving therefore the two last paragraphs of our Paper utterly unobserved, they single out onely one proposition, against which this present Paper of theirs is wholly directed, wherein our words are these;

That none are to bee allowed upon differences in matters onely of Government, to withdraw communion from us in things wherein they declare an agreement; but seeing it is confessed in Worship and Doctrine we are one, and have covenanted to endeavour the nearest conjunction and uniformitie; there may be such indulgence granted to any as may constitute them in distinct separated Congregations, as to those parts of worship wherein they can joyne in Communion with us, hereby some expedient may be endeavoured how to beare with them in the particulars wherein they cannot agree with us.

Hereunto they reply distinctly; 1. To our advice; 2. To the reasons of it; against our advice they have four paragraphs, the first of which is in these words.

This supposeth, what our professed judgement is and hath been against, namely, that Members or Pastors of the Parishes as now they are; for the Honourable Houses thinke not meete as yet to give power to the Ministers by a law to purge the Congregations so farre as the Assembly it selfe desireth, and we have not (as you know) presumed to seeke the alteration of the rule established: and the rule for purging the Parishes drawn up by the Assembly it selfe to the Honourable Houses, is not onely short, but exclusive of what wee in our consciences thinke is required by God for the qualification of Members, so that it is not to us to view how the Parishes shall be reformed to that which will satisfie our consciences; and as the Divines of the Reverend Assembly have said, they can not without sinne administer the ordinances to the

Parishes

Parishes as they stand, so neither can we continue or become Members or Pastors according to our principles; and we humbly desire that our consciences may be considered herein for forbearance, as our Brethren desire that theirs may for power by a law.

Whereunto we answer, What that is which they call their *professed judgement*, would much more clearly appeare unto us, if we could ever obtaine that, which hath been so long and so much desired, namely, a full and distinct modell of their way: but for the thing in hand we had no reason to suppose, that what we advised was contrary to the judgemeat of our Brethren; sure we are when at this Honourable Committee it was pressed upon our Brethren then present to declare whether they would joyn in communion with us in those things wherein they doctrinally agreed, they did not then declare it to be contrary to their professed judgment, nay the vote which was then made to be reported to both Houses, namely, that if the Congregations were purged, it would very much tend to accommodation, was passed, *nemine contradicente*; and why our Brethren should make the notion of Parishes, *as now they are*, as a ground of separation, when they know further reformation is covenanted, and intended, we know no reason: must the communion of true Churches be forsaken in all things, because in some things they want reformation, and that even then when reformation is endeavoured? must a man refuse to live in any part of his house, because some one chamber or other is out of repaire, and about to be mended? It is no good Logick as to our own houses, and we thinke it is no better as to Gods: we could not but look upon it as reasonable (whatever our Brethrens judgement is) that in those things wherein there is a doctrinall agreement, (as in faith and worship, our Brethren profesle) there might be amongst men, so agreeing, a practicall communion, especially considering that they can occasionally joyn with

us in those other things, concerning which their principles differ, which could not but put us in hope that some expedient to salve that difficulty might the more easily have been provided. And if our Brethren may be neither Members nor Pastors of any of our Congregations, how come they, or what calling have they to have any ministeriall relation at all unto them? they preach to them, they receive maintenance from them, when a delinquent Pastor hath been sequestred, they have entred upon his place, and received the profits of it; we know our Brethren do not preach to our people as Apostles, Evangelists, or Prophets; nor without any ministeriall mission: and if they preach the word to them *virtute munneris*, as the Ministers of Christ, and as unto professed Christians, not as unto Pagans (as we hope they do,) why they may not stand in relation of membership as well of ministry or teaching, *eousque* at least as they do doctrinally agree with us, we know no cause; we look upon preaching the word as an office, which no man ought to exercise except he be sent, Rom. 10. 15. if our Brethren may be unto our Congregations *aliquousque & quoad hoc* Officers, why not in like manner Members? especially since we beleeve our Brethrens judgement is, that men may be Members in a Church wherein there are not (either out of the exigence, or out of the iniquity of the times) all the ordinances distinctly to be found in being, much lesse in perfection; the Church of *Israel* was fourty years together without circumcision in the wildernesse: and is it unlawfull for Christians who live in Kingdomes where there are not in Ecclesiasticall Congregations every office or ordinance, suppose Deacons, or Ruling-Elders, or the like (the doctrine and worship being otherwise pure) to live as Members in those Churches? if they may so do notwithstanding the totall want of one ordinance, why may not our Brethren do the like with us, notwithstanding a graduall defect only

ly in another, especially, when some expedient is endeavoured to cure that defect as to them; and when separation, both by the intrinsecall evill of it self, and by the example which is thereby given unto as many as will to despise our Churches, and by the pernicious use which ill minded men may make of it to hinder both reformation in the Church and tranquillity in the State, doth evidently threaten so much danger unto us.

They tell us, *That the Honourable Houses thinke not meet as yet to give power to the Ministers by a law to purge the Congregations so farre as the Assembly it selfe desireth*: They herein intimate that the Assembly hath desired a power to be given to the Ministers more then the Houses thinke fit to grant; we desire our Brethren to shew where the Assembly have desired or adviced the power which they conceive needfull for ordering of the Church to be placed in the Ministers, without mentioning of others who concurre with them: if they cannot, they must give us leave to look on such expressions, rather as artifices then as arguments; but have our Brethren at all waited to see what the Honourable Houses with the advice of the Assembly would do in the reformation of the Church? did they forbeare separation till it appeared what power the Houses would grant? did not they anticipate the advice of the Assembly, and the resolutions of the Parliament in gathering Churches out of ours, before they could foresee, or be able with a judgement either of truth or charity to conclude that our Churches notwithstanding reformation begun, promised, covenanted, would continue indeed as to them unreformed still why do they argue from what the Houses thinke not meete to do, or from what the Assembly hath thought fit to advise, when themselves thought meete to separate before the one or the other was known? sure we are, that we are little beholding to our Brethren, for helping forwards those desires of ours for such a measure of reformation as themselves acknowledge to be good, and we

beleeve to be sufficient, when one of them hath publickly professed *that he would not joyn with us while he lived*, and it was said in the open Assembly that *though the thing we desired was good, yet they would not concurre with us in it, because it would be an hinderance unto them*; but for our parts, though our Brethren refuse to joyn with us in what themselves acknowledge to be good, yet we doubt not but God who hath stirred up the Honourable Houses to begin so happy a reformation, will by them in his good time consummate it, though our Brethren withdraw their assistance, and yet we cannot see what singular excellency the reformation which our Brethren would seeme to aime at, hath above what the Assembly have advised; for they have told us that they would admit Anabaptists, (and we suppose upon the same grounds Antinomians and Arminians) into communion; and one of our Brethren hath said, *that in their way, if a man declare himselfe willing to joyne with them in all the ordinances of Christ so farre as he knowes, this is Covenant sufficient to joyn himself with them*; we thinke that most in our Churches within the power of the Parliament have undertaken as much, as this comes to, in the Nationall Covenant.

They adde, *That they have not presumed to seek the alteration of the rule established.* 1. They endeavor to make it void in all respects unto themselves. 2. They presume to practice contrary to it without the civill sanction or toleration, which we conceive comes much nearer to the formall nature of a presumption, then when a reformation is but begun, and *in fieri*, for those who are called together to advise about it, by way of humble petition, to desire not the alteration, but the further perfection of the rule. 3. To seeke a totall exemption from a rule, hath surely more of confidence in it, then to desire that, unto that which is done already, more may be added with a purpose to submit to all. Our Brethren seeke no alteration in the rule, because they intend not to be subject

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to it. 4. The more defective the rule is, the more colour will they have for separation and gathering of Churches, and are likely to gain the more people from us: we wonder not at all, that our Brethren being vigilant enough upon their own interest, do not seek an alteration of the rule *in melius*, when it might tend to the prejudice of that; we beleeve their piety would dictate and justifie as great a presumption as this they speake of, if their wisedome did not look upon it as inconvenient to themselves.

They say, *The rule for purging the Parishes given up by the Assembly it selfe to the Honourable Houses, is not onely short, but exclusive, of what we in our consciences think is required by God for the qualification of Members.*

Though our Brethren tell us in their Paper afterwards, that a short man is not to be stretched to the length of a taller, yet we cannot but wonder at their modesty, which when the rule given is not onely short, but exclusive of what God requires, doth not presume to seeke the alteration of it; we assure our selves that the Honourable Houses are so tender of the truth of God, as never to esteeme that presumption which seekes the alteration of that, that is exclusive of what God requires; but withall we wonder likewise at this whole expression of theirs, in their last Paper they told us, that they had the same rule for qualification of Members which the Assembly it selfe holds forth, here they say our rule is exclusive of what they in conscience thinke is required, *nemo tam prope tam procul que nobis*; this constraines us to importune them for their rule for qualification of Members, that it may be clearly laid downe and debated.

So that it is not in view (say they) *to us how the Parishes shall be reformed to that which will satisfie our consciences*; we think this is no good argument for separating from true Churches, because it is not to us in view how they shall be reformed; but so long as reformation is *in fieri*, we judge it more consonant to piety and Christian unity, to waite upon

upon God, till we see what issue his power and providence will bring things unto. In the meane time we long to know, and have desired in the Assembly what reformation of our Parishes will satisfie our Brethrens consciences, or how this Kingdome may be made the Kingdome of the Lord and of his Christ, better then by dividing the inhabitants of it into severall parts by the bounds of their dwelling, that all who give up their names to Christ, may be taught and governed, and have all ordinances administred amongst them sutable to their condition.

They alleadge the example of the Assembly; *As the Divines* (say they) *of the Reverend Assembly have said they cannot without sin administer the ordinances to the Parishes as they stand, so neither can we continue or become Members or Pastors according to our principles; and we humbly desire that our consciences may be considered herein for forbearance, as our Brethren desire that theirs may for power by a law.* What sect in the Kingdome is there which may not plead exemption from the rule, and liberty to act what it selfe thinkes fit by such an agreement as this? The Assembly never refused communion in Parochiall Churches, nor disliked the distinguishing of Congregations by locall bounds; but they cannot administer to wicked and scandalous persons in those Parishes, such men are on all hands confessed to be apparently unworthy: doth it follow that because we do desire a power to keepe away those who are truly scandalous upon principles confessed by all; therefore they upon error of judgement (as we suppose) may desire a power to keepe away those who are not scandalous, but as to knowledge and visible conversation duely qualified? they would faine make our desire looke like a desire of Power, theirs onely as a desire of forbearance, when in truth they desire a greater power then we either do or dare desire: we desire to keep away onely those that are scandalous, and to have a rule to strengthen us therein; they do not onely keep all such away, but many more

more, without ether rule warranting them, or a forbearance permitting them; some better way would be found out to further their own desires, then by misrepresenting ours.

Their second paragraph is in these words; *If we could, yet according to what is proposed, we must for ever want that great ordinance of the Lords Supper, which cannot but much prejudice us to the Elders and Members of the Congregation from whose communion we thus separate, and yet we must be under their government and censures thus prejudiced by us, which how unreasonable it will be, we desire our Brethren to consider.*

We answer. 1. That it doth not follow if they be Members of our Congregations that they must for ever want the Lords Supper; except they will say that unto the receiving of the Lords Supper, it is necessarily requisite that a man be a formall Member of that Congregation where he receives it; if they affirme this, what then becomes of their occasionall communion? if not; why may not some expedient satisfie them in this to prevent so great an evill as separation? for they here do themselves professe separation from communion with us. 2. We may not do evill for any good end, if a man should be brought to such a straite, as that either he must want the Lords Supper, or separate from the Congregation whereof he is a Member, he may here want the ordinance (during this error of his conscience) with lesse danger, then to purchase it by a sinfull separation; this is a strange and dangerous way of arguing, which may open a gap to as many divisions and sub-divisions in the Church as the errors are unto which the mindes of men are subject; if one mans conscience cannot allow the word preached but according to a diverse fancy, which he hath framed to himselfe, another not hold communion where infants are baptized, another not receive the Lords Supper but after his own supper, or in such kinde of bread or wine, as is not in use

or the like; if such perswasions of conscience, when men cannot receive the ordinances, but according to their own private principles, shall be a sufficient ground for renouncing of membership, we desire our Brethren to consider how long not our Churches onely, but their own, or any other Churches in the world shall be free from incurable unquietnesse. 3. If our Brethrens consciences through error do cause prejudice against them, is it unreasonable for them to be under the government of that Church which is prejudiced by them? may they with good reason scandalize the Church by separation, and the Church have no reason to governe them? then prejudicating or scandalizing errors are as *superfedeas* to all government, we do not then wonder that errors and perverse opinions so much abound, it may be they are all but the *mediums* to liberty, and exemptions from government. 4. There can no such prejudice remaine against them, if what they do, they do only by vertue of a speciall indulgence.

In their third paragraph they say; *All this supposeth also, that we are to be under the government of a Church whereof we are not Members; for we account not living in the Parishes to be sufficient to make a Member of a Church, nor did many of you.*

What our Brethren meane by *all this* we know not; we are sure there is no such supposition can be drawn out of the words of our proposition against which this Paper of our Brethren doth militate; it hath not one word of Government to this sense in it, but only of Communion, it doth not suppose men to be under the government of a Church whereof they are not Members, but it doth expresly suppose that they may be Members in a Church, and hold a practicall communion so farre as they do doctrinally agree, and to those purposes having forbearance as to those other ordinances wherein they differ: But it is worth the observing how our Brethren avoid government by withdrawing of membership, cut out their names as it were out of the

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Colledge book, that they may free themselves from the discipline thereof; what Heresie, Schisme, or Scandall hath not by this meanes a ready way to escape all government? we grant that living in Parishes is not sufficient to make a Member, a Turke, or Pagan, or Idolater may live within the bounds of a Parish, and yet be no Member of a Church; a man must therefore first in order of nature be a Member of the Church Visible, and then living in a Parish, and making profession of Christianity, he may claime admission into the society of Christians within those bounds, and enjoy the priviledges and ordinances which are there dispensed.

In their fourth paragraph they say; *It supposeth this ground, the reason of which we see not, onely the charity of it we cannot but wonder at, that because we come so neare in doctrine and worship and communion with you, therefore we must not have an indulgence in a difference which yet concernes the edification of our soules by ordinances that are so necessary.*

We thinke our proposition was not so destitute either of reason or charity as our Brethren would seem to charge upon it; The reason in it was this, that doctrinall agreement should preserve practicall communion in the things wherein that agreement stood. The charity this, 1. that we did desire to continue Fellow-members with our Brethren in Church-unity and to prevent separation. 2. That for that purpose we did advise some expedient to be endeavoured how to beare with them in the particulars wherein they cannot agree with us; if notwithstanding our agreement in most things, and those most substantiall, nothing will satisfie our Brethren, but a separation from us (the word is their own in the second paragraph) and they cannot be edified without scandalizing the Church of God, we leave it to all men to judge whose charity is greatest, theirs who labour to preserve union, or theirs who resolve to separate and break it; we thinke that charity bindes Christians to prevent all un-

just and needlesse separation; and suppose *Brownists*, *Anabaptists or Antinomians* were in our Brethrens Congregations, and they should finde out some expedient to hold communion still with them, and so prevent their separation, would this be esteemed a breach of charity? or is all expedient to this purpose impossible, save onely renouncing of membership? our Brethren must give us leave to wonder at their charity as well as they do at ours, that comming so near to us in Doctrine and Worship, nothing should content them but a separation.

Thus farre our Brethren have made observations upon our advice; in all that follows they endeavor to answer the reasons of it; where we cannot by the way but take notice what an edge our Brethren have against Uniformity, and how hastily (as it is said of *Benhadads* servants) they catch at that word to make a large discourse upon it, although had that word been left out of our Paper, the force of the reason would have been the very same which now it is.

Their answer to our reasons is partly argumentative, and partly historicall; we shall breifly consider both. They tell us, *That the uniformity sworn in the Covenant is not only here upon this occasion, but continually, or the like, turned as the great argument against them in pulpits, presses, and ordinary treaties, as if what they desired were contrary thereunto*; how it is elsewhere turned against them by others we know not; if any do it either uncharitably or irrationally, (which we beleeve none that are wise and fear God would do) let them answer for themselves; but sure by how much the more they hear of it abroad, by so much the more reason have they to lay it to heart, and to consider whether that great growth of sects and errors in the Church, under which it so much groaneth at this day, have not occasionally, at the least and in part, grown out of that liberty, & those principles for latitude and diformity as well in practice as in judgement, which our Brethren

Brethren so much plead for and allow unto themselves; but for our mentioning it in this Paper, we thinke it very seasonable and suitable to the matter for which we alleadge it, not with any desire of opposition, or to turne it against our Brethren as their phrase is, but out of a syncere zeal to the peace of Gods Church, and to the preventing of unnecessary separation, which we cannot but thinke would in time prove the occasion of schismes and errors against which we have covenanted.

They tell us, *That this argument cannot hold against them without affixing an interpretation upon that part of the Covenant, according to our own principles only, to the prejudice of theirs.*

Our proposition was never intended for an argument against them, but for a meanes of accommodation between them and us; and that reason and argument which is in them, is not drawn from any private interpretation of the Covenant (which we dare not assume the liberty to affix thereunto, however our Brethren would insinuate the contrary) but from the words themselves; the words are, *that we will endeavor the neareſt conjunction and uniformity*; now we thinke from the immediate and grammaticall sense of these words without any explication at all, the evidence of our reason doth appear: That since we have covenanted to endeavor the neareſt conjunction and uniformity, therefore in those things wherein we professe to be of one minde and judgement, that conjunction should be practically preserved.

They adde, *When we tooke this Nationall Covenant, we were known to be of the same principles we now are of; and yet this Covenant was professedly so attempered in their first framing of it, as that we of different judgements might take it, both parties being present at the framing of it in* Scotland.

We know not how far their principles were then known, they might have been much better known would they have

given a free and full account of their judgement to the world in an affirmative way, and not alwayes kept themselves on the negative part, to object and dispute against the affirmations of others; nor do we know how their principles could then well be known, matters of government not being then when the Covenant was debated before the Assembly till afterwards; but we wonder our Brethren should be so intimately acquainted with negotiations of State, as to tell us that the Covenant was professedly attempered to different principles and to different parties; it seemes to us an undecent assertion, and tending rather to division then union, that Commissioners were sent into the Kingdome of *Scotland* as different parties to be treated with under such a notion; sure we are, our Brethren did not take the Covenant with any *salvo* to their own principles; and if it were made as a Nationall Covenant, (as we know it was) what reason is there to think that it was particularly attempered to them, more then others who have consciences as well as they? doth not this seeme to lay an implicite obligation upon the Parliaments of both Kingdomes, as if neither of them might do any thing in prejudice of our Brethrens principles, least it be interpreted as done contrary to the professed temper of the Covenant, and consequently to the scope of it? These to us are strange intimations.

They further adde; *If this should be the way of urging, it is as free for us to give our interpretation of the latitude or nearnesse of uniformity intended, as for our Brethren, we having been present at the debates of the Assembly about it, and well know and remember the sense which was there held forth thereof.*

For our parts, as we think it not free either for us or them or any private person, to make interpretations of the Covenant, so we deny that we have done it; we have argued from the very words themselves, and so we all must do, or else

else we can make no use of it: As for the sense held forth in the Assembly, which our Brethren so well know & remember, we remember indeed that the Assembly gave their sense by vote touching Prelacy, which was after inserted into the body of the article; but for other particulars concerning which no vote passed, this we know that no Member of the Assembly could give any other sense but their owne as single persons, nothing being the sense of the Assembly, but what appears to be so by their order or resolve; and that if one speak any thing as his sense, the rest being silent, their silence is not to be taken for a consent.

They tell us, *That further when the Assembly was appointed by an order of the Honourable House of Commons bearing date Sept. the* 15. 1643. *to set forth in a Declaration the grounds that have induced the Assembly to give their opinions that this Covenant may be taken in point of conscience; accordingly some of them were by a Committee entrusted to bring in materials to that purpose, and accordingly did, which materials were committed to one of them by a Sub-committee to draw up, and among many other things, that which followes as grounds of taking the Covenant, as touching that first article, that we shall endeavor &c.*

What ever was done by one or more of these Brethren by way of comment upon the Covenant or any article thereof, was not done according to the forementioned order, seeing it requires onely a declaration of the grounds upon which the Assembly gave their opinion concerning the lawfulnesse of taking the Covenant, not an explication of what private men conceived to be the meaning of it, and surely that which is here obtruded as the sense, and the onely sense in which these Brethren judge it lawfull, never passed the vote, never was so much as debated in the Assembly, and therefore cannot possibly come within the compasse of those grounds which the Order relates to; but that which we wonder most at, is that our Brethren should a little befor-

charge us without cause (as hath been shewed) of a crime, and should presently fall into the same themselves; for what is, if this be not, to affix an interpretation upon the Covenant suitable to the principles of one partie, and exclusive to those of another? but we proceed to the explication it selfe.

This endeavor (say they) *in our places and callings for uniformity, we apprehended the meaning of it to be, that as in our ranks and stations we should endeavor it, so according to those generall warrants of the word to regulate such an endeavor in the use of meanes whereby to accomplish it, and therefore as for the pattern, the word of God is to be in our eye, so for the way and meanes and progresse in reducing the Churches to such an uniformity, such rules are to be observed as the nature of such a work will beare, and which the Apostles who had infallibility, observed in reducing the* Jews *and those of the Circumcision, and the* Gentiles *to an uniformity, and without tyranny or pressing mens consciences beyond the severall degrees of light which God vouchsafes to severall Churches more or lesse, &c.*

Our Brethren here give us such an explication of uniformity, as indeed may suite to any the most difformous Churches that are, who will all tell us that they propose to themselves the right patterne, rules and examples, and from thence are instructed unto difformity with others, it is not an uniformity of endeavour which we are bound only unto, but to endeavour an uniformity in the particulars expressed, namely *as in Doctrine and Worship, so in forme of Church-government*: We all most readily agree that the word of God is the rule in all respects for reformation, and the Apostles examples to be followed in all things of perpetuall equity; but doth not the word of God presse upon us *unity of judgement and practice, to be of one minde, of one accord, not to cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which we have learned: to speake the same things, to be perfectly joyned toge-*

together in the same judgement, that there be no divisions amongst us. 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2. *Rom.* 16. 17. 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. Or did the Apostles ever endeavour such an uniformity, or so much as call it so, as was nothing else but a doing every man according to his own light, or to use the phrase of the Old Testament, *that which is right in his own eyes?* did they not suppresse the contentions of men by *the custome of the Churches of God,* 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. and ordaine the same practice in all the Churches, notwithstanding our Brethrens distinction of difference of light? 1 *Cor.* 7. 17. For the case which our Brethren mention of reducing those of the circumcision and the *Gentiles* to an uniformity, were they not thereunto brought by a Synodicall determination? *Act.* 15. And did not the Apostles binde the burden of some necessary things on the Churches, albeit there were in those Churches graduall differences of light?

We could be glad our Brethren had explained themselves when they speak of *Tyranny and pressing mens consciences,* because under that pretence many oppose all kinde of Government, and many most injuriously represent Presbyteriall Government as formidable and tyrannicall; our Brethren in their way exercise the same kinde of power, and that with more rigour; the relief which the law of nature allows to appeal from an unjust sentence, to a power which may correct it, they deny; Christian Professors, though neither ignorant nor scandalous, they shut the doore against, and keep out of communion; They do doctrinally and practically condemn all Churches which are not Independent, refusing all membership and ordinary communion in them, and may according to their principles assume a power to inflict the heavy sentence *of Non-communion* upon them, when they see occasion as a punishment to reclaime them. Lastly we suppose our Brethren will grant these two things, 1. That a Member of a particular Congregation may be excommunicated for Heresie or Schisme. 2. That the Officers

cers of severall Churches may convene, and pronounce a sentence of Non-communion upon other Churches; surely except our Brethren resolve to tolerate all Sects and Heresies whatsoever, they also may soon lie under the charge and *odium* of tyranny.

They proceed and tell us; *Although there be one pattern in our eye in common, which all our consciences swear to bring all to; yet de facto, and in the providence of God it so falles out in the reforming of Churches (now after Antichristianisme hath overspread and corrupted all) that the light grows every age more and more to the perfect day, and the comming of Christ, who is to melt the man of sin by the increasing brightnesse of his comming, and so both persons and Churches, some see more, some see lesse, as we see in the reformed Churches at this day, and will certainly fall out thus in these of ours; now therefore in this case the rule for effecting uniformity must certainly be no other then what the Apostle gives*, Phil. 3. As farre as we have attained let us walke by the same rule; *And therefore the way is to see how farre we have attained, and set downe wherein we agree, (as in all substantials of Faith and Worship it is certain we shall) and so to walke by that as the same rule; and therein such matters wherein we are otherwise minded, to leave it to God, and such good meanes that God may reveale it to them in his time as his promise is.*

We easily understand what our Brethren meane by the overspreading of Antichristianisme, and how they do tacitly charge all who dissent from them with no meaner a guilt; and they tell us of the *increase of light*, *which must melt the man of sinne*; if our Brethren meane by *Antichrist* or *the man of sinne* that which the reformed Churches have generally understood, namely, the Papacy, we do not think but that in the great differences between them and us, the light already revealed is clear and sufficient enough for conviction, and manifesting of the errors thereof; and we beleeve if our Brethren were imployed in that conflict, notwith-

withstanding they appropriate the increase of light unto their way at this time, yet they would not use any more convincing weapons against the man of sin then the Champions of the reformed Churches both in these and other Kingdomes have formerly used; we shall not at this time curiously examine whether the Apostle by ἐπιφάνεια τῆς παρουσίας, which they render the increasing brightnesse of his comming (we know not upon what either ground or authority) meane the light of the Gospell, or the second comming of Christ to judgment, or some other notable manifestation of Christs presence in wayes of power and justice & shaking the earth; but let us admit what our Brethren say, that Antichristianisme is to be melted away by a growing light, doth any such growing light appear at this time? we confesse there is great crying up of new lights; but under that notion do not old and decried errors of *Anabaptisme, Antinomianisme, Brownisme, yea Arrianisme and Photinianisme* break forth to the great scandall of the Church? surely the new lights we now hear of in the most places are no other in the Church then a Comet in the heavens, which doth onely illighten men to foresee calamities; whatever this light is, must it not increase in the next age as well as in this? and must that new light then melt away the Antichristianisme of Independency as that doth in this age the Antichristianisme of Presbytery? and shall Government in every age be changed according to differences of light? have not our Brethren found out a *Jus Divinum* for their way in Scripture? we so understand them; and must some increasing brightnesse hereafter abolish that? to us such principles tend to very Scepticisme and to a floating suspence and continuall uncertainty and unperswasion of judgement.

We heartily embrace the rule which our Brethren give us out of the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 15, 16. and desire to walke by it; but did the Apostle ever intend out of that place to allow Brethren who agree in all substantials of Faith and

Worship to separate from one another, & to deny Fellowship and Communion with one another even in those very substantials wherein they agree? is this to walke by the same rule, and to mind the same things, to separate from Churches in those very things wherein we agree with them? or shall every circumstantiall difference be a sufficient ground to withdraw Communion totally and to all purposes? When there were differences of judgement amongst the *Corinthians* and *Romans*, did not the Apostle write to them as one Church, as one body? did he ever suppose that a few differences should be sufficient grounds for extinguishing the mutuall relation of Membership which they had in those Churches? Besides, may not the Magistrate out of a care to preserve the Churches which are under his Government and protection, in unity, and free from schismes and divisions, allow one way of Government, and disallow another, as they have done in the case of the Liturgy and Directory, and in the case of Episcopacy and Presbytery, without reserving a *salvo* for such as shall in judgement differ from the alteration which they have made? or must Episcopall men be indulged separated Dioceses wherein to worship God and enjoy ordinances suitably to such principles as they hold, distinctly from the Churches under another rule? surely if our Brethrens principles extend to such a latitude for other mens judgements as well as for their own, which we know no reason why they should not, they put them in a fitter temper to covenant multiformity then uniformity.

They go on, *But if an uniformity for uniformities sake, (and so the argument of our Brethren here runnes) that is, affecting uniformity so much as not to regard mens consciences, should be pressed and urged by such meanes as formerly, without respect had to the variety of light in matters of a lesser nature, this were beyond the callings and warrants of the word, and will prove a perfect tyranny; and will be so farre from being a meanes*

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of love, which is aimed at, that it will lay the foundation of confusion and dissension as formerly it did: It is with Churches as with men, and particular Saints, they are of severall Sizes and growth, of severall staturs; and as men are left to be more or lesse holy, as God by good meanes shall make them, so must Churches; as it were against nature to stretch a low man to the same length with a taller, or to cut a tall man to the stature of one which is low, for uniformities sake, so to bring both more growne or more Reformed Churches to a middle stature for compliance with others for meer uniformities sake.

We know not what our Brethren meane by *uniformity for uniformities sake*; we think they asperse us in such expressions as if we laid grounds for *tyranny*, or intended not to respect the *consciences of men*; we desire uniformity for order, and order for edification; we desire it as is expressed in the letter of the Covenant, by which our Brethren are bound as well as we.

But they say *to desire it without respect to variety of light in lesser matters &c.* Certainly separation is not either *in natura rei* or in the consequences of it so small a thing as our Brethren make it; but we wonder our Brethren should mention variety of light here so often, when it is plain that the mention we make of uniformity covenanted, was in order unto their Communion with us in those things onely wherein they and we have an unity of light, *Viz.* in the substantials of Faith and Worship, wherein we desire no more of them then we are confident was practised by the Saints at *Philippi*, to whom the Apostle directs that rule our Brethren make mention of, namely, to hold practicall Communion in things wherein they doctrinally agree; certainly this can never prove a perfect *tyranny*; though for ought we perceive, any thing which is *one* must be judged the foundation of *tyranny*; but to touch that point of variety of light, we desire our Brethren to answer us in this

one thing, whether some must be denied the liberty of their conscience in matter of practice, or none? if none, then we must all renounce our Covenant, and let in Prelacy again, and all others wayes; if a deniall of liberty unto some may be just, then uniformity may be setled notwithstanding variety of lights, without any *tyranny* at all.

We acknowledge degrees of light and growth amongst men, and do not affirme that some must be kept under for conformities sake with those who are worse then themselves; or that all matters of difference in judgement must be authoritatively decided for uniformitie sake; yet hence it doth not follow but that as *one confession of Faith and one Directory for Worship, so also one forme of Government and constitution of Churches* may be setled; for we are sure that in this generall our Brethren agree with us, that one way for the substance of it is necessary for all, though touching the particulars we are at difference; and the oneneesse of the way (if it be right) can be no hinderance to Christian growth, nor the diversities of growth unto it; are not Christians of severall stature in *France*, *Holland*, *Scotland*, where the Government is but one? may not Churches differ in light and agree in Government?

They say, *As men are left to* be more or lesse holy, as God by good means shall make *them*, *so are Churches*; must men be left to themselves to be more or lesse holy as they please, under no discipline to further holinesse in them? if not, what argument can our Brethren draw from such a proposition between men and Churches? we embrace the proportion, and from thence argue, as men though of different growth in light, ought not to be Independent and exempt from Government, so neither particular Churches; and as men thus differing may be under one uniforme Government, so also may Churches.

For our Brethrens similitude of *low men and tall men*, though

though it be pretty and plausible, yet our Brethren know such are but popular and inartificiall arguments, which have more of flourish then of substance in them; for would our Brethren apply this argument against endeavouring to bring low and middle statur'd Churches to a more growne & more reformed condition, because a low body is not to be stretched to the stature of a taller? why then do they so much endeavour to gather Churches out of ours unto themselves? or if the Magistrate should thinke fit to settle their way by a law, would they allow a *Toleration to Episcopacy, Presbytery, Brownisme, Erastianisme*, or any other Government excogitable by the fancies of men upon this reason, because men must not for uniformities sake be pared or stretched to the measure of other men? would they endure the lower suckers at the roote of their tree to grow till they had killed the tree it selfe? *Ad populum phaleras.* But since they will use such kind of arguments, we must needs learn of them who is the low man, and who the tall, least the low man be cut yet shorter by uniformity, or the tall man stretched taller; though they know without stretching or cutting, long and short timber may be imployed in one and the same building, and tall men and little children be Members of one and the same family without separating from one another; but did the *Apostles and Elders of Jerusalem* cut tall men and stretch low men when they ordered necessary things for mutuall peace? we will not envy our Brethren their talnesse, we will desire to be low in our own eyes as well as we are in theirs, we confesse *our day* is but *the day of small things*, yet we hope it is *a time of love*; far be it from us to say we are rich and stand in need of nothing, yet we hope when Presbyterian Government is up, we shall labour both by our Ministry and Discipline *to present our Members blamelesse before Christ.* Our Brethren have nothing but what they have received; and time was when he who was taller then all his Brethren by the head was laid aside, and

a low and lowly person came in his roome.

It followes in our Brethrens Paper; *And this suites as with the rules of the word, so with the scope of the article; for look what kinde of uniformity in confession of Faith, the like in matter of Worship and Government is to be intended; and that the rather because directions for Government and Worship are the more remote from all Christians knowledge, and perhaps more obscure in the word, and are the speciall controversies of the times; now as in matters of Faith you would not for uniformities sake determine all differences in judgement, but fundamentals, and an uniformity therein is all intended; so by analogie in point of Worship and Government. And secondly, the end is that God may dwell amongst us, who is the Author of peace and not of confusion in all the Churches, which peace (whilst in his providence mens judgements do and will differ) will never be attained by a rigid uniformity.*

We alledged uniformity covenanted for this end that in those things wherein we agree doctrinally we might agree practically, and not separate as to those purposes; and our Brethren throughout this Paper dispute against it which respect to variety of lights; surely they will not easily perswade us, or (we think) any indifferent man to beleeve that it was not the scope of the Covenant that where there was unity in judgement, there should be at least so farre forth uniformity in practice and communion; surely if the Covenant intend but one confession of Faith and one directory for Worship, we cannot see how our Brethren can make the scope of it to favor diverse wayes of discipline and Church-government; but taking all *pro concesso*, we further answer, that as in matters of Faith we do not for uniformities sake determine all differences in judgement but fundamentals; so when all do agree in fundamentals, if any should for some small differences in judgement separate from Communion with true Churches, we should think that those men did sinne against that unity which ought to be amongst Chri-

Christians so fundamentally agreeing; in like manner, though in matters of Government being more obscure and remote from Christian knowledge, difference of judgment, & haply in some things of practice also, may be allowed, yet when in the most things and those most substantiall, there is an agreement, for Brethren upon smaller differences not to content themselves with such expedients as may be provided to reconcile those differences, but to separate from Communion with true Churches of Christ, we cannot but beleeve it to be contrary to the word of God and to the Scope and Letter of the Covenant; and we would willingly understand from our Brethren what disjunction or difformity is contrary to the Covenant, if this be not, to have divided practice and separated Communion even in those things wherein men have united judgements, or when the peace of the Church is likely to be preserved, if men will not keep Communion with one another no not in those things wherein they do doctrinally agree; for our Brethren do all along insist upon a wrong ground, namely, difference of judgement, when in our proposition the uniformity mentioned is evidently restricted unto unity of judgment.

Our Brethren conclude this long Paragraph thus; *But this order of the Honourable House of Commons so necessary for the satisfaction of all differing judgements, as at first, to take the Covenant, so to continue stedfast therein, and which would in all likelihood have laid a foundation of ending this and other differences, was superseded to this day.*

That there was an order and supersedeas, we acknowledge; but that it was intended for the satisfaction of different judgments we deny; it is but their presumption so to affirme; the use these Brethren made of it was upon pretence of such a declaration to have given in their private sense of the Covenant, which they very much contended for, and the Committee of the Assembly together with the Commissioners

sioners from the Church of *Scotland* opposed as destructive and inconsistent with the end of the Covenant.

For the superseding of it, we give this account; 1. Whereas other orders from the Honourable House were wont to be sent by Members of their own, this was given by one of the under Clarks to one of the Messengers, who brought it to the Scribe of the Assembly after it had lien in the office many dayes. 2. Upon debate it was found that these Brethren, (whose great care to secure their own principles, and long travell to be delivered of that private sense, which themselves had conceived, were sufficiently known) laboured to turne it to a wrong use for their private interest and advantage, as appeared by many circumstances, and in this especially, That one of them though he was in *Scotland*, or in his journey from thence, and not at the Assembly when they debated and resolved the Case of Conscience touching the Covenant, would yet undertake to set down the reasons which moved the Assembly to judge the Covenant lawfull to be taken in point of Conscience. 3. It was the advice and counsell of some Eminent Members of the Honourable House of Commons, who were of the Committee from the House to joyne with the Divines of the Assembly, and the Commissioners from *Scotland*, about the businesse, that this order should not be proceeded upon without further direction from the House. 4. There was an Ordinance of Parliament bearing Date *Feb.* 2. 1643. wherein among other things it was ordained Art. 10. *That for the better encouragement of all sorts of persons to take the Covenant, it be recommended to the Assembly of Divines to make a briefe Declaration by way of Exhortation to all sorts of persons to take it, as that which they judge not onely lawfull, but (all things considered) exceeding expedient and necessary for all that wish well to Religion, the King and Kingdome to joyne in, and to be a singular pledge of Gods gracious goodnesse to all the*

three

three Kingdomes. And in Art. 14. It is again remembred, *That the Assembly of Divines do prepare an exhortation for the better taking of the Covenant*; in obedience whereunto the Assembly did draw up such an exhortation to satisfie the consciences of men for the taking of it; which exhortation being sent to, and read in the House of Commons, they made this order upon it, *viz. Die Veneris 9. Febr.* 1643. *An exhortation touching the taking of the* Solemne League *and* Covenant, *and for satisfying of such scruples as may arise in the taking of it, was this day read the first and second time, and by Vote upon the question assented unto, and ordered to be forthwith printed*; So that in obeying that latter Ordinance we conceive that both that and the former Order of *Sept.* 15. then foregoing, and now insisted so much upon by our Brethren, were fully satisfied.

Our Brethren conclude thus; 2. *We answer that we willingly againe do professe that in the substance of Worship and Doctrine we are one and of the same judgement with our Brethren, yet to practice and enjoy those parts of Worship as ordinances of a Church, there is* (as to our consciences) *necessarily required as the seate and subject of Worship and other Ordinances, a Church State, and those such Churches as where we may be Members, and joyn in Communion therein as Members without sin, which we cannot do as we have all along professed; and such Churches as wherein we can enjoy all Ordinances, which is denied us here in this Paragraph, So that the only way left to reduce us to an uniformity and conjunction in the same practices, is to allow us such distinct Churches from yours according to our principles, in which, and by means of which we shall hold all possible Communion and Conformity with yours, whereas otherwise we shall only retaine an uniformity in judgement, whereas that uniformity the Covenant much rather obligeth you and us all unto, is, that which may be an uniformity in practice, with satisfaction to all mens consciences and their edification.*

Upon their professed unity with us in judgement our de-

sire was they might continue Communion and Membership with us in those things wherein they so agree; here they answer, *No, they cannot do it without sinne*, and intimate two reasons of it, 1. *Because to practise and enjoy those parts of Worship as Ordinances of a Church, there is necessarily required as the seate and subject of Worship and other Ordinances, a Church State.* 2. *Those Churches must be such, as wherein they may enjoy all Ordinances, which is denied them, they say, here,* 1. This to us voids their occasionall Communion quite, for can they occasionally practice and enjoy Worship and Ordinances out of the seate and subject of that Worship and Ordinances? or, when they preach and pray with our Churches, do they not dispence those Ordinances to our people as to Churches of *Christ* who come unto the Ordinances as in their proper seate to be edified and comforted by them? 2. They tell us not what their Church State is which they make the seate of Ordinances, and which we want, and consequently enjoy Ordinances out of their right seate; They acknowledge us true Churches of *Christ*, have not true Churches the State of Churches? are not true Churches the seate and subject of Worship?

But they say, *They must be where they may enjoy all Ordinances, which here is denied them*; 1. We know not any Ordinance which will be denied them in our Congregations. 2. Have they all Ordinances in their own Churches? do not they hold Ruling Elders to be an Ordinance? have all their Churches Ruling Elders? or may they be in their own Churches without some one Ordinance, and not in ours? if they should think anointing of the sick with oyle, or washing of feet be an Ordinance, will they be no Members where they cannot enjoy these? To determine controversies of Faith and cases of Conscience judicially, is an Ordinance; if they be of no Church but where that is exercised, and the liberty of opinions judicially restrained, their Churches would soone be dissolved, and they would finde it we beleeve difficult to gather more.

As

As for their own expedient for uniformity and conjuction with which they conclude, namely, *to allow them distinct Churches according to their own principles*, we look upon it but as a riddle, and wonder how disjunction can be an only way of conjunction, & multiformity of uniformity, & separation of communion, and different principles and practices of conformity; what Churches under Heaven may we not hold conjunction, uniformity, communion with upon such termes?

They say, *They agree with us in judgement, but will not joyn in practice*, but perswade us, *that not joyning in practice is the best, the only meanes to attaine unto that practicall uniformity which the Covenant principally intends*, and close all up with this glosse upon uniformity in practice, *That it must be with satisfaction to all mens consciences and their edification*; This to us sounds as if they did not onely desire *liberty of Conscience for themselves, but for all men*, and would have us beleeve that this is all the uniformity which the Covenant requires, that we should *endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdomes to the neerest conjunction and uniformity*, yet so as that we may *leave all men to the liberty of their consciences*; we hope our Brethren have some other meaning, yet at present these their expressions savor so much of such a sense, that we cannot understand what they do meane lesse then this; and whether that be the sense of the Covenant, we humbly leave together with this whole Paper unto the consideration of this Honourable Committee.

After the delivery of this Paper, the Committee of Lords and Commons, and Assembly of Divines adjourned to a day, but being diverted by other occasions, have not since had any meeting, and so there was no further proceeding in that business.

FINIS.